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COVER SHOT: *Explosions bloom below a Japanese bomber on September 14, 1940, in Chongqing, China. Early in 1942, Los Angeles residents feared they'd suffer the same fate. Fear became panic on the night of February 24, when anti-aircraft guns opened up on what seemed to be a Japanese air raid.* LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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★ KILROY WAS HERE

Acting or *Reenacting*

NOT LONG AGO, I WAS VERY SKEPTICAL OF REENACTING. It was back in the days when I worked at a Civil War magazine, immersed daily in early 1860s history. Something about studying the Civil War makes some men want to dress head to toe in wool during the dog days of summer, sleep on the ground without cushioning, yell "huzzah" in unison, and march around in boots purposely made by a skilled craftsman to be uncomfortable.

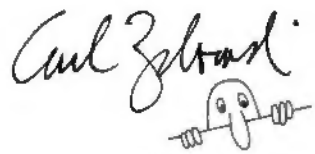
I was not one of those men, and my leeriness about them piqued when one particular reenactor, the purest of the purists, gained renown in our little corner of the world for soaking his uniform buttons in urine to give them just the right patina. And it only got worse. During battle reenactments, he'd get "shot," fall on the field, and slowly puff up his cheeks to simulate the bloating of a fresh corpse. I thought of grownup Dungeons and Dragons fanatics dressing up in pseudo-medieval attire and venturing into caves and forests to pretend to slay goblins and orcs with broadswords and wizard spells.

But not all reenactors are fanatical. Most of them do more to teach us about our past than to fulfill any sort of personal fantasy life. They study how people looked and acted in previous times, what they did and what they knew. Then they dress up and do their routine, demonstrating their equipment and wares, for the sake of anyone interested enough to watch. I've seen plenty of interesting examples of this at WWII history events.

As for reenacted battles, well, how else besides maybe movies could a person who has never been in combat get even a vague idea of what their ancestors saw when they and thousands of their comrades attacked thousands of the enemy? Big reenactments draw big crowds, and, we hope, those in attendance learn about history while being reminded of horrific events that should not be forgotten.

Every February the Fort MacArthur Museum in San Pedro, California, hosts a reenactment that even the unconverted skeptic can enjoy. Spotlights crisscross the night sky. The rat-tat-tat of machine guns rattles eardrums. Artillery shells burst as fireworks overhead. I won't say too much more and spoil the story that begins on page 32, "The Battle of Los Angeles," but no one in San Pedro feigns death by enemy fire. And the whole thing ends with a period dance featuring the music of Dean Mora and the Fort MacArthur Officers Orchestra.

So I've decided that reenacting is OK after all. In fact, I might be considered a reenactor myself. I get together regularly with a bunch of guys who re-create rock music. We don't get stoned or wear tie-dyes, and our hair is too sparse to keep long, but we do occasionally suffer realistic spats among band members and other highly believable group-related drama. It's mostly harmless, though. No gunfire. And, beer notwithstanding, no bloating.



Carl Zebrowski
Editor, *America in WWII*

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V-MAIL

SEEING BACKWARDS

I WAS READING your August edition, and a picture on page 38 [in "A Sailor's Adventure of a Lifetime" by John E. Stanchak] caught my eye. It shows two sailors with a fake bar background, but their whiskey bottles all have the letters reversed on the table in the foreground. Any idea what could make the picture look that way, since the lettering behind them is correct?

MR. KRETZ
received via e-mail

Editor's reply: *Our best guess is that the photo was hastily printed in the darkroom from two separate images—one the backdrop and the other the bar with the sailors. The developer accidentally flopped the negative of the bar and the sailors when the composite image was printed. Perhaps it was the photographer who emptied those bottles…*

PICTURES OF DAD

I CANNOT BEGIN to tell you how thrilled I was to see my dad's pictures in the latest edition of *America in WWII*. I never dreamed that Dad would get a full page. [The writer's father, Private First Class John Chichilla, is pictured on pages 25 and 30, in "Losing Dad" by Allyson Patton in our August 2014 issue.]

Please thank Allyson for her story. She did a great job. And thank you also for the great mention of AWON [the American WWII Orphans Network, www.awon.org]. We all appreciate getting the word out in the hopes of finding other orphans who think they are alone.

As a result of the article I received a call from a navy veteran who lives fairly close to me, wanting to make sure I had seen the article. That was so sweet. He invited us to come visit sometime. He wants to take us out to dinner. Always love meeting with a veteran.

SANDRA MACDUFFEE
Binghamton, New York

COURTESY OF JOHN STANCHAK

John Stanchak and a buddy pose at a fake bar in a photo studio. What happened to the bottle labels?

SOME DADS VOLUNTEERED

I ENJOYED Allyson Patton's moving article "Losing Dad" in the August 2014 issue. However, it gives the impression by the fathers profiled in it that dads who fought in World War II did so only because they were drafted or enlisted before they would be drafted anyway.

The move to call up fathers was not inevitable in the early years of the war. It was unpopular with the public and much debated before it finally happened. Meanwhile, many young fathers joined up because they felt a duty to defend their country. So did older dads, some of them WWI vets, who proudly enlisted, in some cases alongside their college-age sons or daughters.

For example, Clifford E. Clinton (founder of Clifton's Cafeterias in Los Angeles) joined the army in January 1942. He was 41, a WWI vet of the American Tank Corps, married, and the father of a 20-year-old in the coast guard. Charles Paddock, the Olympic sprinter once known as "the world's fastest human," was a married father of two boys, ages 17 and 11, when he joined the marines in July 1942, just shy of his 42nd birthday. He was killed in a plane crash during his service in the Aleutians, in July 1943.

JILL L. GRAHAM
Sacramento, California

Editor's note: *Without contradicting Graham's point that some fathers who served in the US military in World War II did so voluntarily, it's worth noting that author Allyson Patton's article prominently featured a voluntary enlistee, Private First Class William Jackson. The article focused on children's experience of losing their dads in the war.*

THE CASE OF THE MISSING BEER

I READ THE ARTICLE on beer from the home front in the April 2014 issue ["Morale in a 12-Ounce Can" by David A. Norris] and found it of great interest. My dad, Billy D. Garlit, was in the US Navy Armed Guard from 1943 to 1946. He was often on Liberty ships delivering US Army cargo to various ports in Europe and North Africa. The cargo was normally accompanied by an army officer who was in charge of eventual delivery. My dad said the army officers were not savvy to the details of the ships.

One Liberty ship (possibly the SS *Hannibal Hamlin*) took beer once as part of her cargo, and the merchant marine and navy crew quickly found out about it. My dad said that when the cargo was unloaded, there were hundreds of empty bottles in one of the holds. Apparently the crew enjoyed the convoy, and the army officer did not discover the cargo diversion until arrival in port.

DONALD GARLIT
received via e-mail

Send us your comments and reactions—especially the favorable ones! Mail them to V-Mail, America in WWII, 4711 Queen Avenue, Suite 202, Harrisburg, PA 17109, or e-mail them to editor@americainwwii.com.

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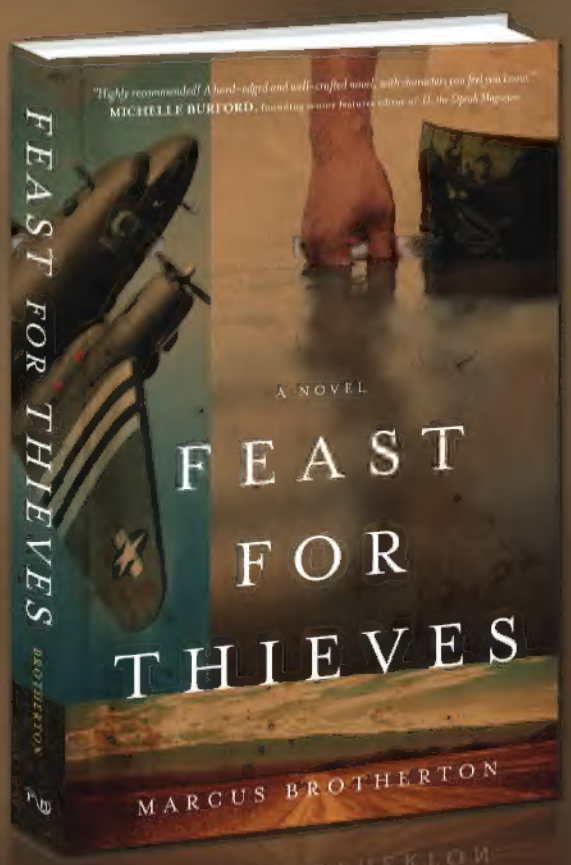
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A NOVEL
FEAST FOR THIEVES
MARCUS BROTHERTON

Sergeant Rowdy Slater was the most incorrigible paratrooper in Dog Company during World War II. But after the war, when Rowdy robs a bank, he vows to turn his life around.

The lawman, suspicious that Rowdy's confession is a sham, gives him an ultimatum: Rowdy must serve one year as the town minister, or go straight to jail. Rowdy's choice? Preaching at the church in Cut Eye, Texas, at the midpoint of nowhere and emptiness.

At first the job seemed easy, but when Rowdy's past haunts him, he's forced to make a deadly choice.

This wild ride bursts with bank robberies, barroom brawls and desperate prayers. Before the smoke clears, all sides might get exactly what they want.

Marcus Brotherton is the author or coauthor of more than twenty-five nonfiction books. Notable works include *Shifty's War*, *A Company of Heroes*, and the oral history project *We Who Are Alive and Remain: Untold Stories from the Band of Brothers*, a *New York Times* bestseller. This is his first novel.
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AMERICA IN WWII

PINUP

Alice Faye

Alice Faye was a hit-maker. Her deep alto voice put nearly two dozen on-screen songs on the charts. But despite immense success at 20th Century–Fox in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the silver-screen songstress wanted *out* of Hollywood.

Born Alice Jeane Leppert in New York City in 1915, Faye became a vaudeville chorus girl as a young teen. She landed a Broadway role at age 16 and a few years later won the female lead in the Fox film *George White's 1935 Scandals*. Her career skyrocketed. Midway through World War II, she starred in the Technicolor musical *Hello, Frisco, Hello*, for which her hit "You'll Never Know" won the 1943 Oscar for Best Song.

Pregnant while filming *The Gang's All Here* (1943), Faye lost interest in her career. Although she was at the pinnacle of her success, she announced her retirement from film in 1945. She and her second husband, comedian Phil Harris, then starred in a radio show based on their madcap family life. It was a hit, and it ran until 1954. Faye died of cancer in 1998, three years after Harris's death.

—KRISTEN CARMEN
editorial intern

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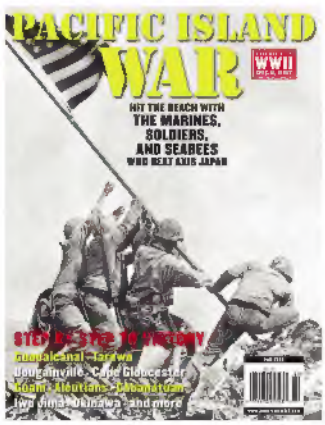

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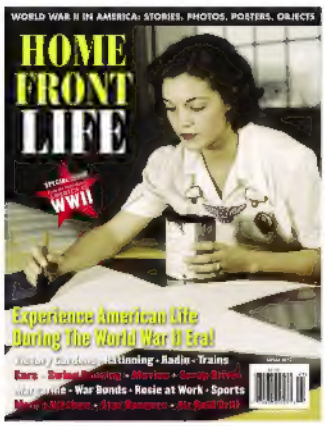
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Rationing Halloween

by Carl Zebrowski

"BEHEADING OF THE GHOSTS" was the name of what the gathered were watching. Armed guards led a victim into a dimly lit chamber and prepared him for the executioner who waited there. "The axeman then raised his axe and as it descended, apparently on the victim's neck, the lights were extinguished and a resounding whack was heard, followed by a scream," read an item in the 1940 edition of *The Fun Encyclopedia*.

The scene was just fun and games, a skit that was part of a Halloween celebration. The would-be victim was acting. But skits like this didn't seem right when boys were heading overseas to face *real* deadly weapons. Halloween had to change during the war, and it did.

Halloween festivities in those days focused less on trick-or-treating than they would in the postwar years. That tradition was just coming into its own, and wartime sugar rationing didn't help. Still, when kids did walk door to door, people gave what they could. "Dressed in makeshift costumes, a bunch of 8-year-olds roamed the neighborhood—a block each evening for three nights until 7:30 P.M. or so...," recalled Nancy Hoag of her childhood days in Racine, Wisconsin. "We weren't only given candy but often invited in to visit with the moms and dads whose loved ones were serving our country."

More typical of Halloween celebrations were town parades and parties, which had grown in popularity through the thirties. In 1939, for example, Newark, New Jersey, had hosted a grand parade featuring 40 large floats. "Police estimate that more than 300,000 persons lined both sides of Broad Street from Lincoln Park to Washington Park, the line of march of the parade," reported the *New York Times*.

The effort to keep up traditions like this

COURTESY OF SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

The most popular getup at this Halloween 1943 gathering of Seattle kids appears to be the seemingly timeless mishmash costume.

was enthusiastic, but as the war demanded ever more resources, celebrations had to be scaled back. In some places, volunteer organizations cobbled together what they could to save local events. But some municipalities decided to cancel the holiday outright. "If plans work out, there will not be any Halloween in Chicago," reported the *New York Times* on October 15, 1942. "The City Council voted unanimously today to abolish Halloween for the duration...."

Lack of resources wasn't the only reason for cancellations. Another was to discourage the expanding tradition of Halloween mischief. "Soaping windows isn't fun this year," James Spinning, superintendent of schools in Rochester, New York, wrote in 1942. "Your government needs soaps and grease for the war.... Even ringing door bells has lost its appeal because it may be disturbing the sleep of a tired war worker who needs his rest." By the war's end, Halloween mischief was on the wane, due to a national mood firmly set against it, with citizens volunteering for neighborhood watches.

Private home parties were the most common events. Magazines and books offered advice for hosting in those war-strapped times. "Spread a few sheaves of corn around the room or stand up some stalks of corn amid a profusion of gay autumn leaves" was one of the tips for decorating with limited supplies that Ethel X. Pastor offered in the 1942 book *Wartime Entertaining*. Games were a focal point of wartime parties. One of the more popular had blindfolded girls reaching into a bowl to pull out colored cloths—a red one might mean she would marry a soldier; blue, a sailor.

Kids and adults alike showed up in costumes. Clowns, cowboys, and Indians were common. Hobos were everywhere. Witches were, too, modeled on the stereotype Hollywood had recently created in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *The Wizard of Oz* (1939): hags with pointed hats, long noses, warts, and evil cackles.

The entertainment industry occasionally took up a Halloween theme during the war. In 1944, Ray Milland starred in *The Uninvited*, the first Hollywood film to focus on ghosts. Released in mid-October, the film established a formula for future haunted house features, climaxing with a scene atop a windy seaside cliff as waves crashed below. On the music side, the Brian Sisters gave Americans "The Boogie Woogieman" in 1942. In a short clip that played on a Panoram (a sort of video jukebox), the three teenagers were dressed like little girls as they sang in mock fear of "the Boogie Woogie Boogie Man" in Andrews Sisters–like harmony.

After the war ended, Halloween began to return to normal. Parades regained their prewar splendor. Candy was plentiful. Parties perked up to their former level of gaiety, with restored license to treat the scary as fun. Of course, the news was not *all* good: mischief made a comeback, too. ★

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Mustachioed Angel of Justice

by Arnold T. Blumberg

BACK WHEN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE first came to be, the Angel was on the job. Debuting in 1939 alongside Timely Comics' Human Torch in *Marvel Comics No. 1*, the Angel beat Captain America to the crime-fighting scene by a good two years. But it is the star-and-stripes-clad Captain America, not the Angel, whom people remember.

The Angel, a.k.a. Tom Halloway, didn't have powers to speak of, apart from a cape that allowed him to fly when he bothered to use it. Raised in prison by his warden father after his mother died, and trained in everything a growing boy needs to become a crime-fighter, Halloway became a detective. Then he strangely donned a snazzy red, yellow, and blue costume with wings emblazoned on his chest. Sporting an atypical (for a superhero) Errol Flynn-like mustache, with no mask to hide his identity, the Angel turned up in numerous series and had a few significant WWII exploits.

One of the Angel's most bizarre war adventures came in *Human Torch No. 5* in the fall of 1941, when he teamed up with the Sub-Mariner to battle Nazi operatives disguised as zombies. The "Nazombies" were infiltrating Bermuda and striking fear into everyone's heart. But the two heroes uncovered the subterfuge—after the Angel temporarily became the Nazombies' captive—and sent the fake undead soldiers packing.

The Angel crusaded for the Allied cause throughout the war, with the help of other heroes or solo, even falling prey to a Japanese brainwasher who nearly turned him into an Axis assassin. He appeared more than 100 times in multiple titles and was retroactively considered a member of the wartime All-Winners Squad.

Despite all this, unlike Captain America, the dashing Angel eventually faded away into the annals of the Golden Age. ★

DR. ARNOLD T. BLUMBERG *is an educator and the author of books on comic books and other pop culture topics. He resides in Baltimore, Maryland.*

IMAGES COURTESY OF GEPPI'S ENTERTAINMENT MUSEUM, WWW.GEPPISMUSEUM.COM

Above, left: Casting an angelic shadow on the wall behind him, the Angel swoops in to save a damsel from Nazi goons on October 1944's *Mystic Comics No. 1*. Above, right: A panel from *Human Torch No. 5*, from the autumn of 1941, presents the Angel as a Christlike figure.

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BOB GABACK COLLECTION

The Big State's Big Battleship

by Mark D. Van Ells

Texans have always boasted about their state—about its size, its industries and natural resources, its history and heroes. So it's appropriate that the battleship that shares its name is genuinely worthy of bragging.

The USS *Texas (BB-35)* is the world's last surviving dreadnought battleship (the type of heavily armed vessel built in the run-up to World War I). The only existing US vessel to have served in both world wars, she was the scene of several US Navy firsts. She was the first American battleship to be fitted with anti-aircraft guns (1916), the first to launch an aircraft (1919), and the first to be equipped with radar (1939). In February 1941, the 1st Marine Division was activated on her deck.

By 1945, the battleship known as the Mighty T had put in more than 30 years of service. At the conclusion of World War II, the navy planned to mothball her, but the people of Texas wouldn't hear of it. After a spirited statewide campaign, the navy agreed to turn the ship over to the state. In 1948, she became America's first ship to be turned into a museum. Today she is anchored in a specially built slip near Houston at the Battleship *Texas* State Historic Site.

Commissioned in 1914, *Texas* went to work right away to support the US occupation of Veracruz, Mexico. During World War I, she escorted transatlantic convoys and then joined the British fleet to spend the war patrolling the North Sea for U-boats and protecting minelayers. Her Great War service was honorable and valuable, but she did not take any hostile fire.

World War II was different. Even before the United States entered the fray, the *Texas* was patrolling the North Atlantic, protecting US ships that were transporting supplies to Britain under the provisions of the Lend Lease Act. In November 1942 she participated in the invasion of French North Africa, hitting Vichy French positions along the Moroccan coast. Her most important combat was on D-Day, shelling German positions on Omaha Beach and Pointe du Hoc. She suffered her first and only fatality weeks afterward, off Cherbourg, France, in a duel with German shore guns.

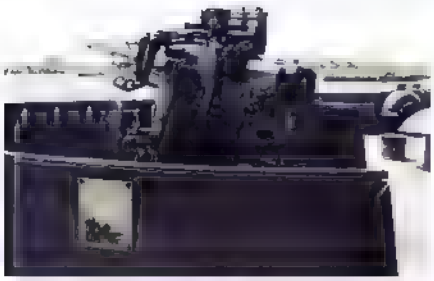
The battleship *Texas* is the US Navy's only surviving veteran of both world wars. Her 14-inch guns menaced U-boats in the Great War and shelled Omaha Beach three decades later.

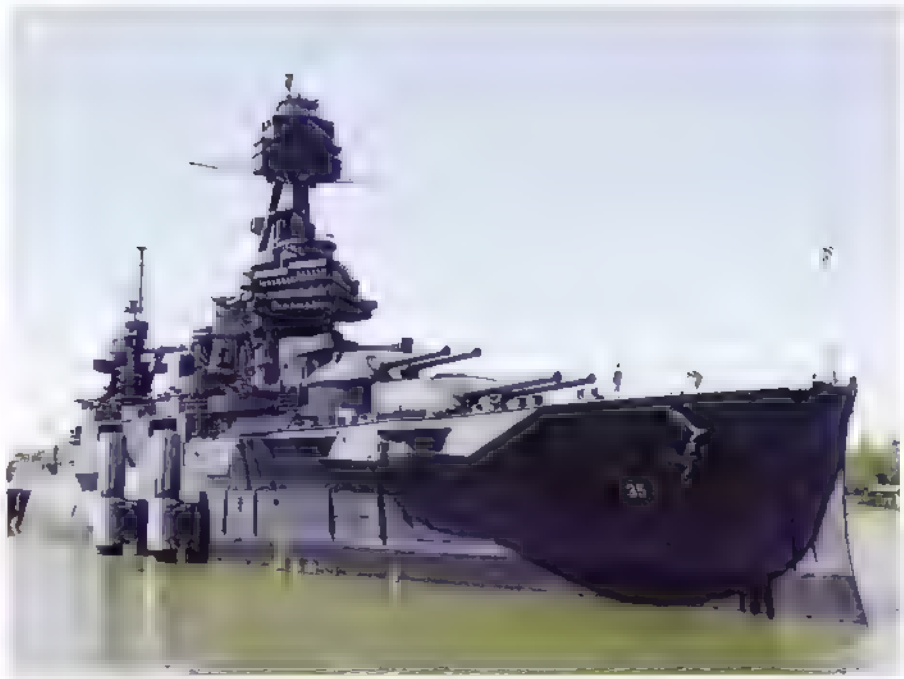
After covering the invasion of Southern France in August 1944, *Texas* headed to the Pacific. Her guns blasted Japanese positions on Iwo Jima in February 1945, and then she sailed for Okinawa, where she had some close calls with kamikazes but was never hit. After the war, she completed one final mission, Operation Magic Carpet, ferrying GIs back to the United States. When the Lone Star State took ownership of the vessel, Admiral Chester Nimitz, a Texas native and the wartime commander of the US Pacific Fleet, gave the keynote address at the ceremony.

Texas is now moored at La Porte, 26 miles east of Houston on the Buffalo Bayou, one of America's busiest waterways. Massive oil tankers glide past the old warship on their way to the numerous refineries that surround the park. The area is hardly an industrial wasteland, though. Right next door to the ship is one of the places Texans hold most sacred: the San Jacinto Battleground, where Sam Houston bested Santa Ana to assure Texas's independence from Mexico in 1836. A star-topped battle monument—a stone column towering 570 feet above the battleground—is easily seen from the ship's deck.

Texas has been painstakingly restored to its WWII condition, down to the very shade of blue paint she wore during the Pacific campaigns of 1945. Walking up the gangplank and onto her main deck, visitors immediately encounter a pair of three-inch anti-aircraft guns behind protective steel shields. These guns were her main defense against kamikazes.

Visitors can climb up from here to see the navigation bridge and combat information center. The ship's only fatality was suffered in this area, when a shell hit the





ALL PHOTOS THIS STORY: MARK D. VAN ELLS

Upper left: Visitors can inspect the *Texas*'s guns up close. Nearby plaques provide information. Lower left: The ship's canteen offered off-duty sailors a chance to buy little luxuries such as candy, cigarettes, and magazines. Right: The *Texas*, wearing the shade of blue paint she'd worn during World War II, rests at her permanent berth outside Houston, next to the San Jacinto Battleground.

tower on June 26, 1944, and killed Helmsman Christen Christensen.

Perhaps the most impressive objects on the main deck are the 14-inch guns, 10 of them, paired in five turrets. Agile, and patient, visitors can climb inside Turret No. 1, one of the ship's most popular features. The famous *Iowa*-class battleships of World War II had bigger guns, but from the looks of the massive barrels of the Mighty T, the Germans and Japanese must have found them rather formidable.

Also on the main deck, interpretive panels give an overview of *Texas*'s history, from her origins through the end of World War II. Several tell of the lives of her sailors. One panel explores the racial makeup of the crew. Most of the sailors were white, while Filipinos and African Americans served as stewards for officers. For a time during World War II, Commander Jose Cabanillas, a native of Puerto Rico, was the ship's executive officer.

The ship's second deck delves further into the lives of the more than 1,000 men who called the *Texas* home during World War II. Here, for example, is what the sailors knew as Main Street, where services such as the library and post office were located. On the shelves of the canteen are boxes of war-era candy, gum, and nuts and popular magazines. Today's visitors may be shocked by the vast quantities of cigarettes and other tobacco products available.

Main Street captures the most personal aspects of the sailor's life. One sign here marks the small but busy prophylactic room, where all sailors returning from shore leave were required to report. In contrast, not far away is a reproduction of the ship chapel's altarpiece, a triptych by New York City artist Frank J. Reilly. A comforting Jesus with outstretched arms appears in the center, flanked by his words, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

The Battleship *Texas* Foundation works in conjunction with the Texas state park system to promote and maintain the Mighty T. Among the foundation's various offerings to visitors is a hard hat tour, where guides lead groups to unrestored parts of the ship that are not ordinarily accessible to the public. The tour's name is no joke—hard hats are provided and required, and participants are warned that they should expect to get dirty.

This year, the USS *Texas* turned 100 years old. It's an event worth celebrating. This veteran of two world wars is one of the most historically significant military vessels in existence. Having fought on two oceans off three continents in some of World War II's most critical engagements has cemented the Mighty T's reputation as one of history's great ships. ★

IN A NUTSHELL

WHAT The Battleship *Texas* State Historic Site

WHERE La Porte, Texas

WHY The battleship USS *Texas* meticulously restored to its WWII condition • The striking sight of the ten 14-inch guns paired in five turrets on the ship's main deck • A look into the daily lives of the crewmen belowdecks on "Main Street"

For more information visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/battleship-texas

MARK D. VAN ELLS *teaches at Queensborough Community College in New York City and is author of the book* America and World War I: A Traveler's Guide. *His website is markdvanells.com*

old ships turn

the tide

The US Navy looked hopeless after Pearl Harbor—until four of its WWI-era destroyers ripped into a Japanese invasion convoy off Balikpapan.

by Donald W. Kenn, Jr.

old ships turn the tide

by Donald M. Kehn, Jr.

US Navy Commander Paul Hopkins Talbot could not believe his luck. The four ships of his Destroyer Division 59 had somehow slipped through a screen of Japanese destroyers off Balikpapan, Borneo, at 2:30 A.M. on January 24, 1942. And just ahead, Japanese troop transports sat anchored and vulnerable in the darkness. The USS *John D. Ford*, with Talbot aboard, raced forward to attack, with *Pope*, *Parrott*, and *Paul Jones* right behind. The American crewmen were eager to blast the enemy that had driven the United States into World War II seven weeks earlier.

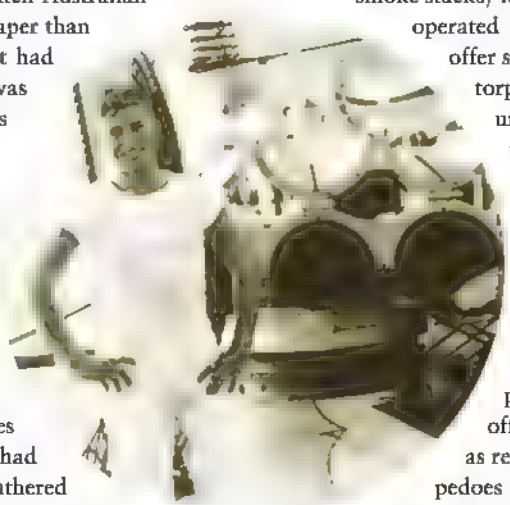
Since attacking the US naval base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Japanese forces had rushed like a storm into the Southwest Pacific. They invaded the Philippines, drove into the resource-rich Dutch East Indies, put troops ashore on Celebes (now Sulawesi), and seized the island of Tarakan, off Borneo's northeastern coast. If they could seize Borneo, they would reap the precious bounty of its oil fields and gain access to quick routes to the Java Sea for their warships. Left unchecked, they would gain unfettered passage to the Indian Ocean.

Allied forces in the Southwest Pacific were in a tight spot. Against the full weight of the Japanese navy stood only a polyglot coalition called the American British Dutch-Australian Command (ABDA). More impressive on paper than in reality, this hastily assembled force that had just become official on January 15, 1942, was short of men, ships, and planes and was scarcely capable of offensive operations. Its American component, the US Asiatic Fleet under Admiral Thomas Hart, was tiny and antiquated. Its surface forces boasted just 3 cruisers and 13 destroyers

For some time, Vice Admiral C.E.L. Helfrich, commander of the Netherlands' naval forces of ABDA, had been advocating an American blow against the free-ranging Japanese navy. But Hart's limited resources were stretched thin. In mid January he had planned two raids against Japanese ships gathered off Kema, along Celebes's northeastern coast. When neither panned out, he turned his attention to Makassar Strait (between Borneo and Celebes), toward which a convoy of Japanese transports had steamed. While he raced to organize a small striking force, the convoy dropped anchor in the waters off Balikpapan, the refining hub of oil rich Borneo. Japanese troops began swarming ashore to occupy the city by January 23. The transports, tempting targets, remained in place.

But the shaky force that Hart had assembled was further weakened when the light cruiser *Boise (CL-47)* struck a rock and the light cruiser *Marblehead* developed turbine trouble. That left him with just four aging destroyers that dated back to just after World War I. This makeshift flotilla had the unenviable task of challenging top-of-the-line Japanese warships in the US Navy's first surface combat action since the Spanish-American War of 1898.

Hart assigned the daring mission of attacking the transports to Talbot and his newly formed destroyer division: *John D. Ford (DD-228)*, *Pope (DD-225)*, *Parrott (DD-218)*, and *Paul Jones (DD-230)*. For the 47 year-old Talbot, who would command the division from aboard Lieutenant Commander Jacob "Jocko" Cooper's *John D. Ford*, the job presented a particular challenge. His health was shaky, and his four-pipers (so-named for their four smoke stacks) were not only old, but also had never before operated together as a tactical unit. But they did offer some firepower, with each carrying a dozen torpedoes. If they could make the trip north undetected, slip past Japanese escorts, and take enough time to hit their targets squarely, they could inflict a considerable pinprick. But that was a lot of ifs.



A Simple Plan

The setup was straightforward: surprise the enemy under cover of darkness, strike quickly, and get out. "Initial weapons will be torpedoes," Talbot told his officers. "Transports chief objective. Cruisers as required to accomplish mission. Launch torpedoes at close range if unsighted by the enemy. Attack independently. If necessary when all torpedoes fired, close with all guns. Use initiative and determination."

Most of the Americans didn't like their odds. Nighttime gunfire in this pre-radar phase of the war had to be directed by searchlight, and turning on their searchlights exposed ships to enemy fire. "The average life of a destroyer in action is fifteen minutes," noted Lieutenant Norman Smith, navigator for *John D. Ford*. Several of the division's officers prepared for getting stranded on land, making emergency kits of razor blades, fishing line and hooks, food rations, quinine pills, and matches packed into condoms. Few had any battle experience. Almost all admitted to

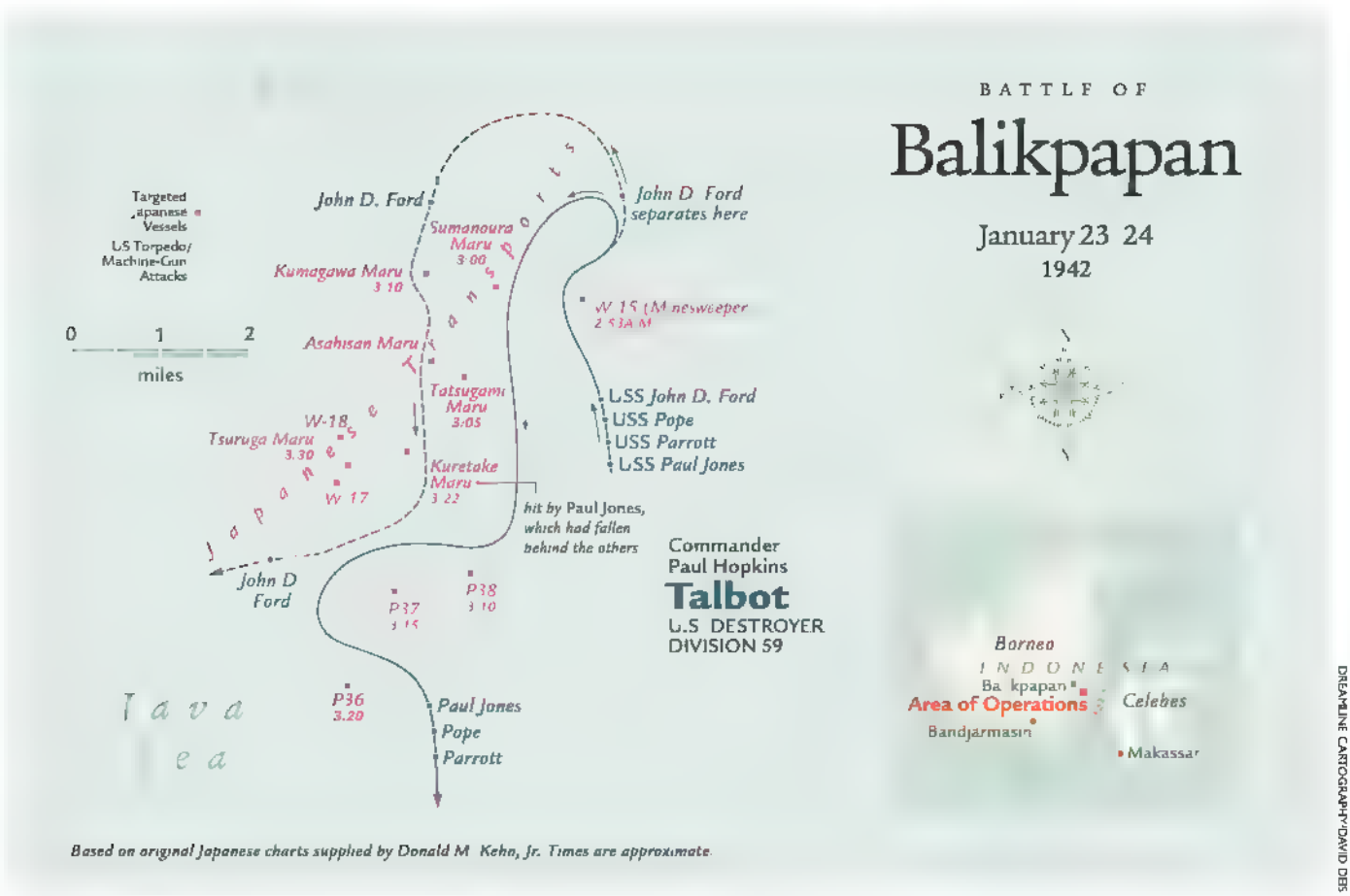
PREVIOUS SPREAD: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

LEFT & OPPOSITE DONALD M KEHN JR., FROM RICHARD LILLIE

Previous spread: A US Navy destroyer fires a salvo and lights up the darkness of the Pacific with a fiery cloud of smoke. In the early days of war, before radar, nighttime naval gunnery and surface fighting was especially risky. Above: Photos from ships of US Destroyer Division 59 are rare. But here, an American sailor, possibly aboard the USS *Pope*, smiles for the camera in 1939. After Pearl Harbor, US Navy crewmen would have few occasions to smile amid grim conditions in the Pacific—at least until the Battle of Balikpapan. Opposite: As this view from the fantail of one destroyer suggests, the Americans' long voyage toward Balikpapan and the unknown was bumpy and tense.

old ships turn the tide

by Donald M. Kehn, Jr.



DREAMLINE CARTOGRAPHY/DAVID DEES

being scared. Bibles began appearing on bunks.

By 1 A.M. on January 23, Talbot's destroyers had reached their jumping-off point southwest of Makassar, in the Java Sea, and had gotten the word from Hart to proceed with the attack. They formed a column with *John D. Ford* leading, followed by *Pope*, *Parrott*, and *Paul Jones* and steamed north at 22 knots (25 mph). Ahead lay 400 miles of danger. "For several hours I rolled and tossed...in the darkened wardroom but did not sleep," recalled Lieutenant Jack Michel of *Pope*. The weather was miserable. But the rough seas, heavy showers, and gale force winds helped conceal the tiny American force from enemy eyes. This would prove a significant blessing.

Between 11:15 and 11:30 P.M. on the 23rd, the alarm sounded to send the men on all the American ships to their battle stations. A warm glow soon appeared on the horizon 30 miles to the north. At first mistaken for a searchlight, it proved to be the burning hulk of the abandoned Japanese transport *Nana Maru*, which Dutch B-10 bombers had blasted a day earlier. This was another blessing: the light thrown by the lingering flames would help guide the US ships toward their targets.

By 2:30 A.M. on January 24, Talbot's crews were beginning to make out the dark shapes of enemy ships. Ahead, to the left, sat a line of Japanese transports that stretched almost five miles. The Americans sped in column at 28 knots (32 mph) into the smoke-shrouded but calm waters of Balikpapan Bay.

The bay was an eerie place. Michel remembered feeling "cut off from the rest of the world as we approached a misplaced corner of Hell." At about 2:35 a column of Japanese destroyers passed from right to left some 3,000 yards ahead of *John D. Ford*. The Americans were sure they had been detected by screening ships, but they received only one half-hearted challenge, in the form of a blinking blue signal light from a lone Japanese vessel. Talbot's ships did not respond, and the Japanese made no effort to stop them.

Open Fire

Emboldened, the Americans plowed forward, unseen, into the enemy anchorage. Suddenly, through the light haze, "countless ships began to appear on both sides." A few tense minutes later, Talbot ordered his ships to fire torpedoes "as targets became available." On the bridge of *John D. Ford*, the excitable Lieutenant Commander Cooper barked, "Action port! Torpedo action port!" His ship fired two torpedoes to port, with her chief torpedo man whacking the firing pins with a maul to ensure the powder ignited properly.

Meanwhile, *Parrott*, under Lieutenant Commander Edward N. "Butch" Parker, launched five torpedoes from point blank range at what appeared to be a Japanese destroyer. From the column's rear, *Paul Jones* fired one torpedo at what proved to be the same ship: *W-15*, a 700-ton minesweeper. The target could not have

been more than 1,000 yards away, but it was hard to fire accurately from a ship that was moving fast. Every torpedo missed.

The misses mattered little, however, for the Americans now had their pick of targets. The *Parrott* chose one about 4,000 yards off her port bow and fired three torpedoes at 3:00. The column then altered track slightly to starboard before looping back to begin another run. Excited by the complete surprise he had achieved, Talbot bellowed, "Get that yellow bastard!" as *John D. Ford* launched its own torpedoes.

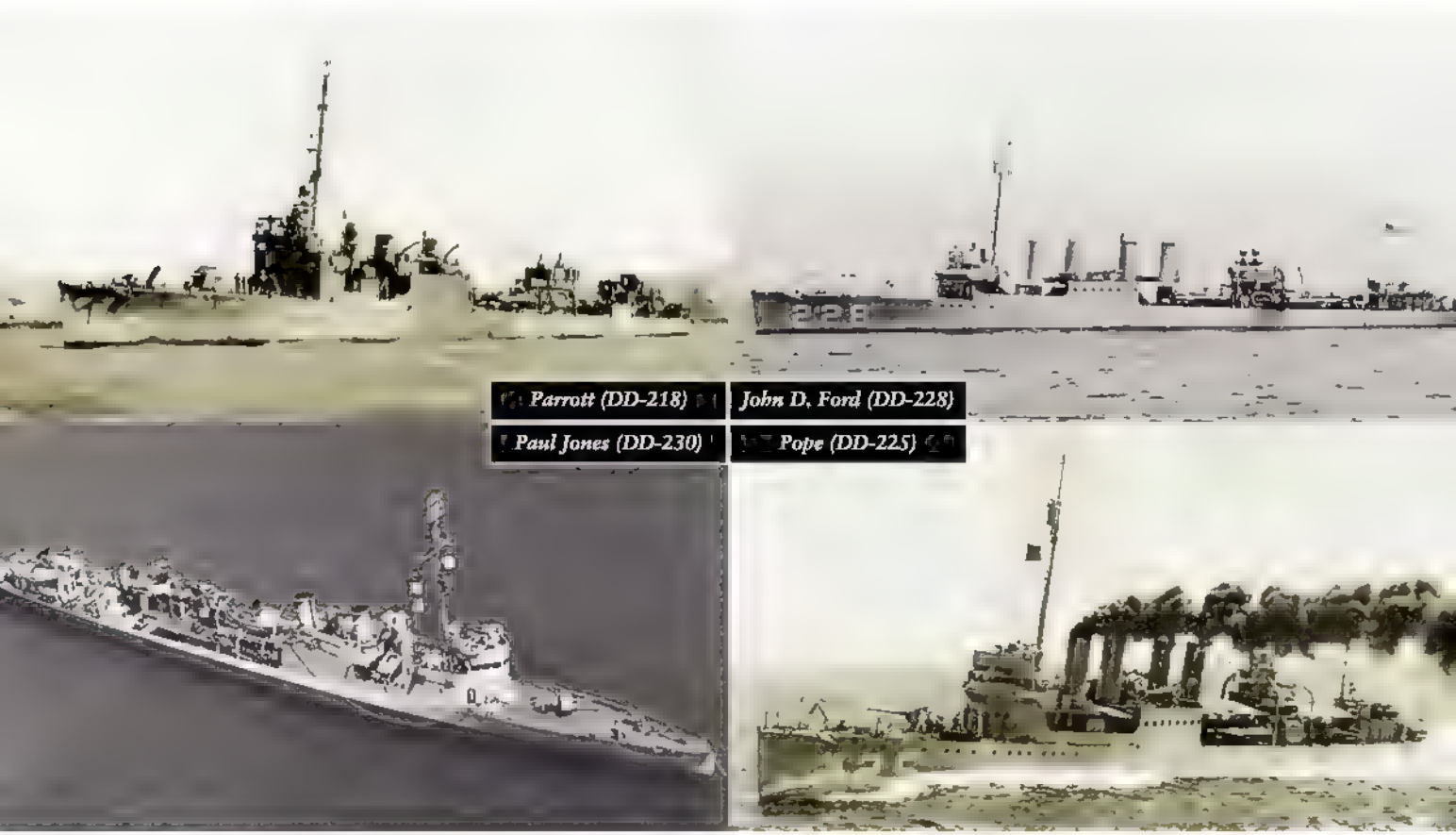
The column had just swung around when a torpedo detonated off *Parrott*'s port quarter (left rear) and a column of fire rose 300 to 400 feet. Finally, an American torpedo had struck home. The victim was the 3,519-ton Japanese transport *Sumanoura Maru*, whose holds were filled with mines and depth charges. Aboard *Pope*, Michel saw what he described as a "great mushroom of flame."

By now, the entire Japanese force realized intruders were present. Among the anchored Japanese transports and their startled escorts, recognition and signal lights began flicking on. Searchlights crisscrossed in the sky, seeking out Allied planes. Adding to the confusion were the subchasers of Rear Admiral Shoji Nishimura's 4th Destroyer Squadron. Charged with protecting the landing force, Nishimura had sent his ships steaming through Balikpapan Bay in search of whatever had sunk the transport *Tsurugu Maru* a few hours earlier. (The culprit was a Dutch submarine.)

With all the activity and confusion, Talbot's narrow-hulled destroyers remained undetected. The situation seemed ideal. But then Cooper turned his *John D. Ford* sharply west to avoid wandering into shallow coastal waters that had been mined by the Dutch. In the process, the destroyer pulled away from the rest of the column, and Talbot ordered Parker, his senior skipper, to take charge of the rest of the division.

Steaming alone now, *John D. Ford* encountered the wayward Japanese transport *Kumagawa Maru*. Anchored next to *Sumanoura Maru* when that transport exploded, this auxiliary supply ship had scrambled southwest and out of danger. But not for long. *John D. Ford* raced toward the starboard quarter of the slow-moving *Kumagawa Maru* and opened fire with her main battery four-inch guns, scoring at least 10 hits. Crewmen manning .50-caliber machine guns riddled the transport's stern with rounds. The combined fire killed six Japanese sailors.

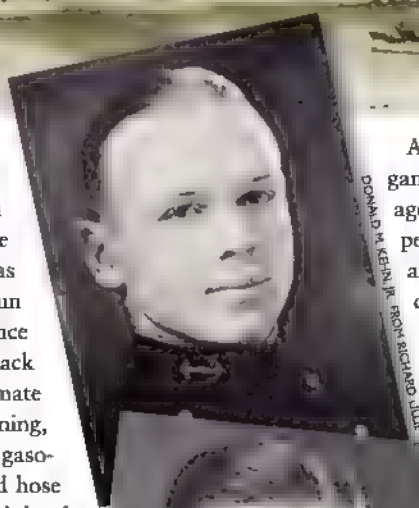
But as *John D. Ford* sped off to the west, *Kumagawa Maru*'s gunners sent three salvos right up along her port quarter. A fourth



THIS PAGE US NAVY

Above: The aging but plucky ships of US Destroyer Division 59. All of them were among the *Clemson* class of destroyers that had gone into production during the late stages of World War I. Twenty years later, as World War II approached, the entire class was obsolete. Some of the ships were scrapped. Others were swapped to the British navy as part of the 1940 Destroyers for Bases Agreement. But those that remained active in the US Navy could still sting, as the Japanese navy discovered in early 1942.

old ships turn the tide by Donald M. Kehn, Jr.



DONALD M. KEHN JR. FROM RICHARD LILLIE

DONALD M. KEHN JR. FROM RICHARD LILLIE

struck her below her after deckhouse and the four-inch gun atop it, igniting hand grenades, torpedo detonators, lubricating grease, and a can of reserve gasoline. High above, in the destroyer's crow's nest, the spotting officer was momentarily blinded by his own ship's gun flashes. He regained his sight in time to notice what looked like a comet lighting up the black night. Luckily a quick-acting electrician's mate had saved the day. Contrary to all his training, which had taught crewmen never to spray a gasoline fire with water, he turned a fully charged hose on the flames and washed the entire fiery glob of burning material overboard.

Radioman Third Class John T. Darby was sitting in the open hatchway between *John D. Ford*'s auxiliary radio room and her torpedo repair shop when the Japanese shell slammed home, just a few feet away. Miraculously, the open hatch saved his life. He was blown 20 feet through it and landed against the number four (port) torpedo mount. He suffered multiple shrapnel wounds to his back that would land him in a hospital in Surabaja, Java, home of the main Dutch naval base.

Jack Burshem, a quartermaster manning the wheel at the aft steering position atop the after deckhouse, was cut by shell fragments. But he struggled to his feet and, clinging to the binnacle (which housed the ship's compass) for support, continued with his duties. Two other crewmen were also wounded.

At roughly 3:05, *Parrott*, *Pope*, and *Paul Jones* ganged up on another large target, the already damaged transport *Tatsugami Maru*. Hit by several torpedoes, the 7,000-ton ammunition carrier blew up and sank within 30 minutes. Minutes later the destroyers turned on what was thought to be at least one Japanese destroyer off their port side. Their target was actually one of two patrol boats, *P 37* and *P 38*, that were steaming south of the anchorage at low speed. *P-38* managed to evade American torpedoes, but in doing so apparently blocked *P-37*'s view of the American ships. Mistaking one of the attackers for the light cruiser *Naka*, Nishimura's flagship, *P-37* approached, flashing recognition signals. Her crew paid heavily for the error. One torpedo hit her in the stern and knocked out her power. A sitting duck, she was struck moments later by two more torpedoes in the bow and stern as the American ships wheeled around her. With three dozen crewmen killed, *P-37* was left completely disabled.

Soon all the American skippers had contacted the now-exhausted Talbot for permission to open fire with their deck guns. In the wheelhouse of *John D. Ford*, Talbot gave his OK. At 3:25, *Pope*, skippered by Lieutenant Commander Welford "Willie" Blinn, opened fire with her main battery, targeting a pair of Japanese destroyers and a transport. With Lieutenant Bill Wilson directing and Michel spotting, *Pope*'s

TOP & OPPOSITE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Opposite: The five-inch guns of USS *O'Bannon* erupt during the July 1943 Battle of Kula Gulf in the Solomon Islands. Bigger, faster, and more rugged than the WWI-era destroyers of the US Asiatic Fleet, the brand-new *O'Bannon* was one of the first *Fletcher*-class destroyers to enter the Pacific naval war. Above, top: The Japanese minesweeper *W-15* as she appeared prior to World War II. The first enemy ship encountered and targeted by Destroyer Division 59 off Balikpapan, she was fortunate to escape the fate of the immobile Japanese transports. Above, middle: The commander of *John D. Ford*, Jacob "Jocko" Cooper, as he looked in 1926. Above, bottom: Welford Charles "Willie" Blinn, the skipper of *Pope*, as a young midshipman.

guns appeared to hit the transport at least three times. In 20 minutes of action, *Pope* had fired 22 four-inch rounds along with all 12 of her torpedoes

Still fighting in isolation, *John D. Ford*'s gunners—led by Lieutenant William Mack, Jr., Gunner's Mate First Class Dan Mullin, and others—had continued to find targets since their run-in with *Kumagawa Maru*. As *John D. Ford* wound her way alone through the anchored convoy, the gunners shot up virtually everything in her path, including the transport *Asahisan Maru*. Nearly 50 Japanese were dead.

BY THAT TIME, well to the southwest, Lieutenant Commander John D. Hourihan's *Paul Jones* had dispatched five torpedoes of her own. Two of those were fired at 3:22, at the 5,175-ton Japanese army transport *Kuretake Maru*, off her port quarter. At least one hit pay dirt, striking the bow. The transport probably suffered further damage from torpedoes and gunfire from *John D. Ford* before sinking with the loss of 270 soldiers. The last torpedo fired by *Paul Jones* was directed at one of the pesky Japanese patrol boats, which challenged the American four-pipers as they weaved in and out of the convoy. "No other suitable opportunities for torpedo fire were presented to this ship," read a later report from the *Paul Jones*. Her part in the battle was over.

USNA

Talbot, unwilling to press his luck further, now ordered the division to make its escape. The destroyers had begun "heading for the barn," as Cooper put it, when a third Japanese patrol boat, *P-36*, spotted them. Still working to confirm the enemy ships' identity, *P-36* contacted Admiral Nishimura Shoji on *Naka*, even as the four US vessels sprinted past. The message—"sighted four enemy cruisers south of the convoy"—baffled Nishimura. "Were the 2nd Destroyer Division ships mistaken for the cruisers?" he asked. Four minutes later *P-36* responded, "It was a mistake; the cruisers mentioned were four-stack destroyers." Meanwhile, Talbot's gray hulled destroyers disappeared into the darkness.

By now, confusion reigned among the Japanese forces off of Balikpapan. Although Talbot's four destroyers had dashed off well to the southwest, Nishimura directed a division of his destroyers to follow *Naka northward* to attack them. For some reason, his ships did not follow, and his flagship headed back alone to discover the horrible sight that daylight would soon reveal in the anchorage.

Dawn of a New Day

AS A SILVERY SUNRISE FLICKERED on the eastern horizon, the three destroyers under Parker's command came barreling southward out of the Makassar Strait at 28 knots (32 mph). The Americans, astonished by their luck, were putting as much distance as possible between themselves and the enemy forces that they expected would pursue them at first light. They were eager to link up with *Marblehead* and any other escorts waiting for them about 50 miles to the south. The *Marblehead*'s torpedoes and six-inch main battery would offer additional protection from any Japanese ships that might have been on the destroyers' heels

Just before 6 A.M. on January 24, some of the Americans spotted *John D. Ford* steaming toward them about five miles to the northeast. An hour later she overtook her division mates and reassumed her position at the head of the column. By blinker light, Talbot began assembling inventory numbers from his division on fuel, water, ordnance, and enemy ships sunk or damaged. At the same time, dog tired sailors and officers topside turned their exhausted eyes to the south in search of their rendezvous mates

Just after 8:00 *Marblehead*'s mast tops appeared on the horizon 10 miles to the south. Her escort, the US destroyer *Bulmer*, was not far off. Within 20 minutes, the six ships were steaming south together toward Surabaja. Tension on the four-pipers evaporated, and the spirit of the US Asiatic Fleet sailors came through in a series of good natured signals between *Marblehead* and Talbot's destroyers. "Well done!" flashed the cruiser. "Wish we could have been at the party." The *Parrott*'s quartermaster replied, "First party I was ever at with no lights except fireworks. It was so dark I couldn't find the girls!"

Soon, normal sea routine resumed for the destroyers and their crews. Men washed, changed sweat soaked clothes, and ate a decent meal. Cooks on *John D. Ford* turned out hot steak-and egg sandwiches, making sure that sailors standing watch up on the deckhouses or down in the sweltering engine spaces got theirs specially delivered. Because fuel was running low, and due to *Marblehead*'s balky

Above: Admiral Thomas Hart was nearing retirement when he took command of the US Asiatic Fleet. He later received a commendation for steadfast service amid "discouraging surroundings and complex associations." Opposite: The damaged USS *Marblehead* puts in at Tjilatjap, Java, on February 4, 1942. Shortly after covering the withdrawal of Destroyer Division 59, the light cruiser narrowly survived a Japanese air attack that buckled her stern.

USNAVY

turbines, the column slowed to 15 knots (17 mph). The leisurely pace caused some concern, and the American crewmen scanned the seas behind them for pursuing Japanese warships. "Had a mountain loomed up in front, they would have hit it!" Lieutenant David Harris, executive officer of *Bulmer*, joked later. Talbot contacted Asiatic Fleet headquarters in Surabaja for "maximum air coverage," but got none. Fortunately, the Japanese never appeared.

Throughout January 24–25, messages were transmitted to and from Surabaja as the destroyer skippers laid out their accomplishments as clearly as they could to their superiors. They had, in fact, sunk three Japanese transports, the patrol boat *P-37*, and perhaps one or two other vessels.

At 8:10 A.M. on the 25th, Talbot's four weary and worn destroyers reentered the Allied protected waters off Surabaja. By 11:30 they had tied up to the dock where Admiral Thomas C. Hart and members of his staff waited to welcome their crews. Hart had begun writing up letters of congratulations to the crewmen. As Hart boarded *John D. Ford*, the dead-tired crew sprang to attention. "We got a couple for you, Admiral!" blurted Dan Mullin with a grin. Hart smiled and, with a wave, replied, "More than a couple from what I hear."

The Good News Travels Fast

THE GUTSY EXPLOITS OF TALBOT and his destroyermen were welcome news to Americans who had become used to dark headlines early in the war. The press rode the story for all it was worth, facts be damned. A *Life* article inaccurately titled "The Sea Battle off Makassar Strait" called the brief, nighttime clash "a modern kind of sea engagement that may rank in results with Jutland [during World War I] and Lepanto [between Ottoman Turks and Christian forces in 1571]." With numbers pulled from thin air, the article continued: "By January 28, at the most conservative count, they had sunk 13 ships and damaged 18 more, drowning thousands of Japs."

MILITARILY, THE BATTLE OF BALIKPAPAN made little difference. By mid February both Borneo and Singapore had fallen. Between February 26 and March 1, a Japanese fleet finished off Helfrich's ABDA naval forces in a series of battles in the Java Sea. Then Java itself fell on March 8, opening up the Indian Ocean to the Japanese navy

But the daring strike by Talbot's destroyers at Balikpapan would stick with American sailors throughout the war. It provided a badly needed boost to American morale. And it reminded Allied servicemen that all was not lost. ★

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THE TOP-SECRET GIZMO

Could a new-fangled weapon that lit up night like day turn America's ground forces into deadly nocturnal hunters?

by Janice Arenofsky

A LARGE TRACTOR-TRAILER came rattling down the unpaved road to Cunningham Pass, one of three entrances to Arizona's Camp Bouse. Private Gill Terry, a member of the reconnaissance platoon of the 736th Medium Tank Battalion (Special), was on guard duty this September night in 1943. He eyeballed the after-hours visitor warily.

Terry knew that nighttime in this patch of desert held secrets—namely the bright lights that turned Camp Bouse's darkened skies into day during war games. So he wasn't surprised when, after exchanging a few words with the truck driver, he got orders to bring him in for questioning. Terry knew the drill. Intelligence officers would grill the driver to find out what he had seen and what he knew.

The reason behind all the secrecy and the tight 24-hour security at Camp Bouse? The Gizmo. Officially known by the intentionally misleading name Canal Defense Light (CDL), the Gizmo (as the GIs who worked with it called it) was a new secret weapon, and its promoters predicted it would change the course of the war. Surrounded by a confidentiality second only to that of the Manhattan Project (the atom bomb program), the Gizmo was the reason why virtually all of Terry's training maneuvers occurred in the dead of night—beneath a dazzling display of lights never before seen in the history of warfare.

A Bright Idea for Night Combat

THE GIZMO HAD ORIGINATED in Great Britain with a Greek expatriate designing a special tank turret whose chief weapon was a piercing beam of light. The source was a 13-million-candlepower carbon arc lamp mounted inside the turret of M3 Grant and Matilda II medium tanks. The powerful lamp shined through a 2-inch-wide, 24-inch high slot, producing a cone-shaped beam that carried more than 1,000 yards. When a dozen or more Gizmo-equipped tanks advanced together, they erased the night's darkness

The Gizmo's piercing beam was also meant to dazzle and disorient an enemy on the battlefield, and a mechanical shutter could even be opened and closed rapidly to create a strobe-light flicker that induced nausea in some viewers. But the Gizmo's greatest advantage was to render everything behind it invisible. A wall of light from 15 Gizmos could blind an enemy force, while concealing the tanks and their accompanying infantry in triangles of darkness. Meanwhile, a 75mm gun mounted on the right side of the M3 Grant tank added firepower alongside the piercing light.

Demonstrations in the United Kingdom convinced General Dwight Eisenhower, supreme commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe; British Prime Minister Winston Churchill; and other Allied decision makers that the Gizmo could offer a battlefield advantage. "At that time, no one was fighting at night," says Eddie Maddox, Jr., son of a veteran of the 736th battalion and co-editor of *Where Heroes Trained*, a 2004 book on the unit and Camp Bouse. Soon, selected British and American units were training with CDL tanks

In Great Britain, CDL units trained at Lowther Castle in Penrith in what is Cumbria, England, today. The United States, which code-named its CDL program Project Cassock or the

OPPOSITE: IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

Opposite: The Gizmo—whether in British or American form—was a bundle of contradictions that packed a secret wallop. This one, a British-operated M3 Grant CDL medium tank, features a US-made body and a British-made turret, nothing unusual. But the turret's gun is fake. The real weapon—a blinding beam called the Canal Defense Light (CDL)—hides behind the vertical slot next to the sham barrel.

THE TOP-SECRET GIZMO by Janice Arenofsky

Leaflet Program, assigned six American tank battalions to work with the Gizmo in 1942 and 1943, first at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and later at Camp Bouse.

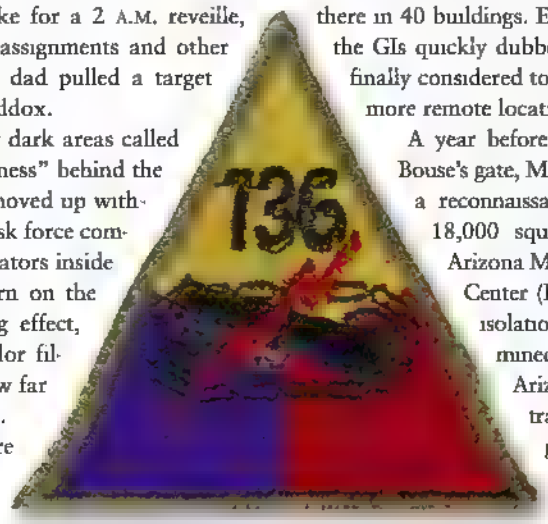
Training Lights Up the Night

TRAINING WITH THE GIZMO BEGAN at Fort Knox's Cedar Creek area in February 1943 with the approval of Lieutenant General Jacob L. Devers, then head of the US Army Armored Force. The Special Training Group, as the CDL trainees were collectively known, coordinated its training content with the British, combining theoretical, mechanical, and technical components into 15 days of lectures, practical applications, and demonstrations.

The men trained in modified, Gizmo-equipped M3 medium tanks, officially known as Shop Tractor T10s. Only two people from each tank crew attended classes—the driver and the light operator. According to Maddox, some trainees thought the Gizmo would fail and they would be easy targets; others were convinced they were preparing for a mission that would save lives

AFTER THE INITIAL INSTRUCTION of the drivers and light operators, maneuvers began. CDL tank teams, consisting of a driver, gunner, loader, commander, and light operator, usually awoke for a 2 A.M. reveille, sometimes setting out on 20-mile field assignments and other times attacking simulated targets. "My dad pulled a target around and they'd shoot at it," says Maddox.

Tanks lined up 90 feet apart, forming dark areas called "triangles," "cones," or "cloaks of darkness" behind the Gizmo wall of light. Armored infantry moved up within the cloaks. During operations, CDL task force commanders radioed orders to the light operators inside the tanks: "Heat" or "halo" meant turn on the lights, "scatter" referred to a flickering effect, and "rainbow" called for the use of color filters, which could make it hard to tell how far away the tanks were, Maddox explained.



COURTESY OF JANICE ARENOFSKY

Although the CDL maneuvers were potentially dangerous for ground troops, Maddox says soldiers remembered only one serious casualty, when someone fell into an open mine shaft. But once the maneuvers moved to Camp Bouse, the harsh desert heat, with summer temperatures hovering around 120 degrees, proved menacing. Training there was complicated and delayed by the daily task of removing rattlesnakes from the firing range. Walls of dust were a problem during full scale division maneuvers, with thousands of men and hundreds of vehicles churning the dry soil.

In action, CDL tanks were both mesmerizing and mystifying. "From over 20 miles away, their arc lamps caused a reflection in the sky resembling an aurora borealis gone mad," said Private Jack D. Gay, a member of the 736th battalion. Residents in the nearby town of Bouse suspected something secret was going on at the camp, but they nonetheless convinced themselves the flickering lights were just lightning from Arizona monsoons, the heavy storms that sweep across the Southwest from July through mid September.

Covering Up the Bright Light

It was the need for secrecy that ultimately brought the CDL training to Camp Bouse. The element of surprise would be crucial to giving the Gizmo the strongest possible impact on the battlefield, and once the enemy witnessed it, it would be just a matter of time before defenses against it appeared. So, from manufacture through maneuvers, mum was the word. The US Defense Department authorized the conversion of 355 tank turrets, but no one involved knew the turrets' final destination. That included Mole-Richardson, maker of the lamps, and Pressed Steel Car Company, maker of the turrets—neither of which knew the other was working on the project. All parts were sent to the army's Rock Island Arsenal in Illinois for final assembly.

Terry recalled how the CDL training had begun at Fort Knox, with a large group of soldiers sent to a specially built training center known as Area X or Cedar Creek. The troops were sequestered there in 40 buildings. Engineers fenced in the entire area, which the GIs quickly dubbed Little Alcatraz. But even Area X was finally considered too accessible, and the army sought a new, more remote location for the Special Training Group.

A year before Terry halted the truck driver at Camp Bouse's gate, Major General George S. Patton, Jr., had led a reconnaissance team into the Southwest, claiming 18,000 square miles of desert as the California-Arizona Maneuver Area (CAMA) or Desert Training Center (DTC). Noting the Butler Valley's extreme isolation and concealing mountains, Patton determined that this portion of the maneuver area, in Arizona's La Paz County, was perfect for training American troops for the CDL program. It became Camp Bouse.

Scraped out of the raw Arizona desert by bulldozers and road graders, Camp Bouse was little more than some pyramidal tents and a well staffed hospital on 1,200 square miles of sand 45 miles northeast of Blythe, California. The perimeter, peppered with signs that shouted "Keep Out" and "No Trespassing," was patrolled by guards with orders to shoot to kill anyone attempting to enter unlawfully. Stray dogs were carted off, and sporadic gunfire discouraged locals from visiting. The odd gold miner or two were bought off, says Maddox.

The Invisible Men

BOUSE'S HARSH CLIMATE TRANSLATED into physical deprivation for

Above: Men of the Gizmo-equipped 736th Medium Tank Battalion (Special) wore this ordinary patch. Only some of the unit's men served inside CDL tanks. The rest were infantry, trained to advance within blind spots created by the tanks' lights. Opposite: An ordinary M3 tank races along during September 1942 maneuvers in California, inside the army's Desert Training Center. Elsewhere in that vast center was Arizona's remote Camp Bouse. There, CDL men drilled under secrecy so strict that their families weren't sure where they were.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

the CDL troops—water rationed by the helmet full, powdered grub, and no refrigeration for food staples. But the psychological pressure of secrecy was even fiercer. "We were the invisible men," Terry says. "We had been given POBs [post office boxes] so as far as anyone knew, we were already overseas."

Families lost track of sons, husbands, and brothers who were assigned to the camp. "We don't know where he went," officials told the brother of Private First Class Joseph Perrotti after his transfer to Bouse. No one was supposed to know where the camp was, Perrotti said in a January 2003 interview for the Library of Congress's Veterans History Project. "We were trucked into the desert, and there was our camp."

Under the Espionage Act of 1917, soldiers were sworn to silence about the camp's true mission, and they faced imprisonment or worse for leaking information. In a November 1943 letter, Colonel F.M. Thompson, the Special Training Group's commander, told his superior back at Fort Knox that he had made his men responsible for any transgressions by anyone. "The dual responsibility of secrecy has been stressed whereby one must prevent his fellows in the project from talking as well as guard his own speech," he wrote. Troops were shown a number of training films with titles such as *Safeguarding Classified Material*, *Mr. Blabbermouth*, and *Next of Kin*.

The flow of information in and out of Camp Bouse was carefully monitored. Letters home were heavily censored, and no personal telephone calls were made without an officer present. No personnel transfers were permitted, and if someone became ill, treatment was administered at the camp hospital. Leaving the base alone was forbidden

Perrotti remembers that if soldiers went off base, they had to be in groups of five. They were even supposed to go to the bathroom in pairs. Terry remembers that the morning after his wedding night, his bride and he were eating breakfast at a Phoenix cafe when several men from the army's Counter Intelligence Corps, tasked with keeping tabs on CDL personnel, walked in. "We got away with it," says Terry. But the secrecy and the supervision were always in the back of his mind.

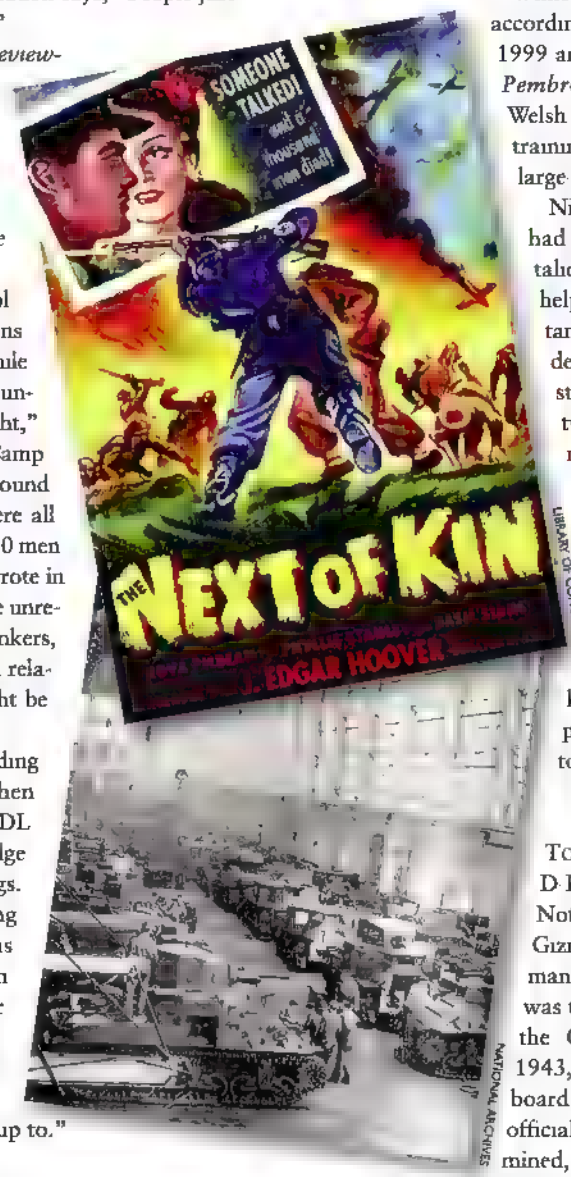
Dealing with soldiers who developed physical or mental disabilities, committed serious offenses, or were caught after going AWOL was complicated. Under ordinary conditions, the result might have

been discharge from the service. At Camp Bouse, however, First Lieutenant Stuart L. Daniels, intelligence officer of the 748th Tank Battalion, recommended that affected troops be dispatched to a separate rehabilitation center. "If these men are sent back to civilian life with the knowledge they now have...and the information were to fall into [an] enemy agent's hands, the success of the entire project...would be jeopardized," he wrote. Maddox says, "People just went away and you didn't see them again."

In a 1984 article in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, writer S. Lee Rourke described how the stress on secrecy affected even soldiers' reputations in their own families. When men returned home on leave, they usually arrived accompanied by a sergeant. Families concluded their sons were under some form of military arrest.

Despite all this, Camp Bouse's CDL soldiers regarded themselves and their battalions as special, and that boosted morale. "While there were 5,200 men at camp, only a few hundred would be working the tanks at night," says Maddox. Just being a CDL man at Camp Bouse meant you had made it through a round of cuts at Camp Rucker in Alabama, where all the men were initially screened. "Almost 100 men were transferred to other units," Daniels wrote in his published recollections. "These were the unreliable, the blabbermouths, the excessive drinkers, the low IQs and foreign born soldiers with relatives living under enemy control who might be coerced into giving information."

For some vets, the tight lips regarding Camp Bouse lasted for decades. When Maddox first began interviewing ex-CDL troops in 1992, some still refused to divulge any information about their wartime doings. Veteran Howard Suttle started talking about the Gizmo only after the project was declassified in 2004. "We signed an oath and they made it real clear that if we ever told anybody what we were doing we'd be shot," he later said in an interview. "We were in the valley of three mountain ranges so no one could see what we were up to."



Gizmos to the Front

HANGING CONSTANTLY OVER THE CDL MEN was anxious speculation about when and where they and the Gizmo would see action. At first they figured they would go up against German desert forces in North Africa. When that didn't happen, they assumed they'd face Adolf Hitler's forces in Europe.

By March 1944, when the CDL men were summoned to Camp Shanks, New York, for deployment to Europe, they had been training for more than a year. Morale was high as they boarded the RMS *Queen Elizabeth* and sailed for southwest Wales. Most hoped they would take part in the coming D-Day landings in Normandy.

While they waited, they practiced. But according to Adrianta James, author of a 1999 article in the Welsh regional magazine *Pembrokeshire Life*, the boggy, uneven Welsh terrain didn't lend itself to CDL training. Crews couldn't always practice large-formation maneuvers.

Night training was as risky as it always had been. Vernon Tweit of the 736th battalion's C Company recalled how, when helping clean a 75mm gun on a CDL tank at Camp Bouse, someone had accidentally poked him with a rammer staff, breaking his nose and giving him two black eyes. But in Wales, minor mishaps occasionally gave way to more serious injuries. On May 18, 1944, a soldier unwittingly positioned himself in front of a moving tank and was severely hurt. B Company of the 738th Tank Battalion lost two men: Technician Fourth Grade Frank A. Carr was shot and killed during maneuvers, and Corporal Raymond S. Theriault died due to a misfire.

A Late, Lackluster Debut

TO THE FRUSTRATION of the CDL men, D-Day came and went without them. Not until mid-August 1944 did three Gizmo-trained battalions sail to Normandy. The main reason for the delay was that the army had begun to recognize the Gizmo's limitations. By November 1943, Major General A.C. Gillem and a board of military experts had issued an official critical report. First, they determined, the tanks were too sensitive to geography. For good illumination, the terrain had to be sufficiently flat and treeless, and the ground not too dusty or sandy. Too much dust in the triangular "cloaks of darkness" could cause the tanks to lose their sense of direction. Weather also could be a negative, especially fog and rain. Wind speed and direction sometimes exacerbated the accumulation of dust. Second, the report continued,

Top: If indoctrination wasn't enough to remind the men of the 736th to be quiet about the Gizmo, there was always Hollywood. Propaganda films such as 1942's *Next of Kin*, in which a loose-lipped mother spills information about her son's army unit, were regular fare for Gizmo men. Above: Secrecy extended to the Gizmo's manufacturers, who sent the components they built to Illinois's Rock Island Arsenal, seen here, for assembly.

COURTESY OF JANICE ARENOFSKY

In the end, the Gizmo proved best suited for Arizona's desert—not Europe's hilly, forested, farmed terrain. "Everything had to be practically perfect" for the CDL to work, said Jack Wireman of the 736th.

the Gizmo's illumination had a limited range. Tests at Fort Knox showed 1,200 yards was the outer boundary of effectiveness. The board concluded that the Gizmo should be used "only when a strategical objective of great value was involved, for the duration of complete surprise cannot be predicted and counter measures will be promptly instituted."

Jack W. Wireman, of the 736th battalion's Service Company, accepted the official conclusion. "You had to have perfect terrain, perfect weather, and everything had to be practically perfect to make it blinding for the enemy," he says. "These tanks threw up a lot of dust, so to me it was just a pipe dream, really." Terry recalls, "We got rid of the tanks in Normandy, left them in the motor pool." Adrianta James wrote that a large number of the tanks were destroyed in a fire at an ordnance dump at Cherbourg, France. Other CDL tanks were lost in a collision between a tanker and a Liberty ship during transport from Normandy back to South Wales.

To what extent timing and inherent limitations affected the Gizmo's deployment, we will never know. But the secrecy surrounding the Gizmo may have contributed to its fate. The Germans never got wind of it, but neither did many American field commanders, who might have asked for CDL units if they had known they existed. By early 1945, the American generals coordinating the Okinawa campaign had heard of the Gizmo's capabilities and enthusiastically ordered 20 CDL tanks. Unfortunately, the tanks arrived in late June 1945, after the campaign was over.

EVENTUALLY, THE GIZMO DID PLAY a role in the war, just not the one its developers had intended. In March 1945, the 738th battalion illuminated the Rhine River with 13 Gizmos as a safeguard against enemy commandos after the capture of the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen, Germany. A month later, Gizmos provided light for troops crossing Germany's Elbe River. Maddox also notes that after the war, in August 1946, Gizmo tanks were sent to Calcutta, India, to quell riots and patrol the streets at night.

"In the end," says Maddox, "[commanders] decided they needed fighting tanks more than CDLs. I would have liked to see it tried, though.... It was a missed opportunity." ★

JANICE ARENOFSKY *is freelance writer based in Arizona who has written for many national publications, including* Preservation, American Archaeology, *and* Scientific American.

THE BATTLE of Los Angeles

Air raid sirens. Spotlights. Gunfire. The Japanese only recently ravaged Pearl Harbor. Were they now attacking California?

by Chuck Lyons

Times
TRUE INDUSTRIAL FREEDOM
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Five Deaths Laid to Raid Blackout

Traffic Accidents and Heart Attacks Take Lives of Quintette

Deaths of five persons—
three in traffic accidents,
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The nine blackouts also result-
ed in injuries to scores of other
persons.
Mrs. Yeotlah Klein, 48, of 307
Mayflower St., Alcadia, was
thrown by an automobile in
which she was riding, collided
during the blackout with a milk
truck driven by Miss Goldie J.
driver, of 2580 S. 10th St.,
of 2600 S. 10th St.
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...ATION, PLEASE

(Editorial)

...o considerable public excitement and con-
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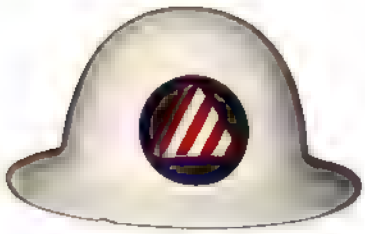


OF LOS ANGELES by Chuck Lyons

Sirens wailed through Los Angeles in the wee hours of February 25, 1942. Air raid wardens ran to their posts. Shell-bursts, sweeping searchlights, and the bright streaks of tracer bullets split the dark sky. This was not a drill. Civilians crowded the hills around the city and stood on rooftops, scouring the night sky for Japanese planes. Cars crashed amid the confusion. The City of Angels, it seemed, was under attack.

As dawn crept in, the firing had stopped and soon the morning newspapers hit the streets. "L.A. Area Raided!" shouted a half-page headline on page one of the *Los Angeles Times*. "Jap Planes Peril Santa Monica...," read the subhead. The *Los Angeles Examiner* reported that civilian witnesses had seen as many as 50 enemy planes over the city. Three had been shot down over the ocean to the west, it said.

But the light of morning showed there had been no attack, and no enemy planes had been shot down. Variously described as a case of war jitters, a false alarm, and even a UFO attack, what history came to call the Great Los Angeles Air Raid—or the Battle of Los Angeles—ended with some 1,400 anti-aircraft shells fired, seven people dead, and area residents and military authorities scratching their heads. What really had happened?

Real Japanese Bombs

After the December 1941 attack on the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii's Pearl Harbor, communities along America's West Coast feared they might fall within striking distance of Japan's sea and air forces. They began suffering from what historians have called "invasion fever," a general uneasiness and fear that first showed itself a day after the Pearl Harbor attack. That day, December 8, 1941, military officials terrified San Francisco residents by calling a sudden air raid alert. The decision was based on reports of incoming Japanese planes and an aircraft carrier offshore, reports that were later called into question.

Adding to the unease in those early months of the war, it was common knowledge that Japanese submarines routinely patrolled off the West Coast and were responsible for sinking several merchant ships in the area. On February 23, 1942, one of those submarines, *I-17*, entered the Santa Barbara Channel and shelled the Ellwood Oil Field, about 12 miles offshore from Santa Barbara and just north of Los Angeles. The attack came while President Franklin D. Roosevelt was delivering one of his Fireside Chats to the nation via radio. During the talk, Roosevelt warned that "the broad oceans which have been heralded in the past as our protection from attack have become endless battlefields on which we are being constantly challenged by our enemies."

Residents of the Santa Barbara area witnessed the oilfield attack. "We heard a whistling noise and a thump as a projectile hit near the house," recounted John Hollister III, who was 10 years old at the time. After about 20 minutes, the *I-17* ceased firing and withdrew. "We knew we were at war before then," resident Ruth Pratt later said. "And after that we definitely knew it."

A story persists that *I-17*'s skipper, Commander Kozo Nishino, shelled the Ellwood facility to avenge a humiliation he had suffered there in the late 1930s. At that time, Nishino had commanded a tanker that stopped there. Coming ashore from his docked tanker, the story goes, Nishino slipped and fell on a prickly pear cactus and was laughed at. But the truth, argue some historians, is that Nishino bombed the Ellwood facility because it was an undefended strategic target.

The *I-17*'s shelling of the oilfield was the first hostile fire directed against the American homeland since the War of 1812. But

PREVIOUS SPREAD: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

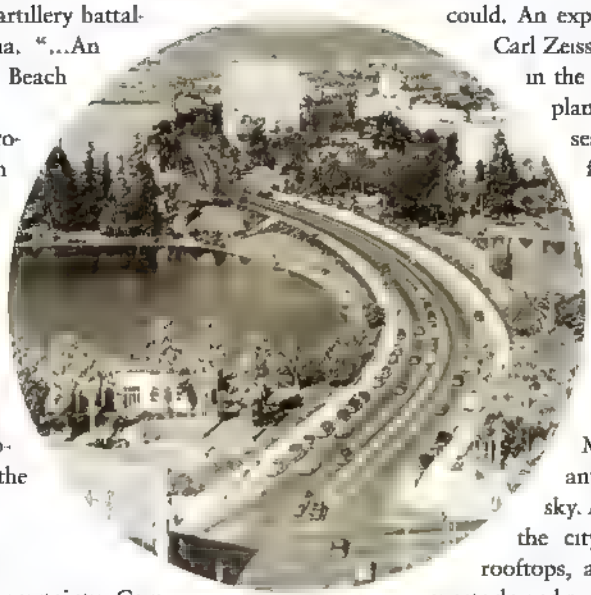
TOP: AMERICA IN WWII COLLECTION. LEFT & OPPOSITE: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Previous spread: "ARMY SAYS ALARM REAL" shouts the *Los Angeles Times* on February 26, 1942. Early on the 25th, army guns lit the sky, shooting at Japanese planes. But were the planes real? Above: Lights rise from LA's harbor in a wartime show of readiness. The city was on edge early in the war. When a Japanese sub shelled a California oil field on February 23, navy officials decided an attack on LA was next. The army put LA on alert. Top: Air attacks were unlikely, but neighborhood air raid wardens—with helmets like this—kept Americans ready, enforcing alerts and drills. Opposite: A warden shows how to hide interior light during blackouts, which made towns invisible.

damage was slight. The sub fired only 16 or 17 shells. Some landed on the beach. Others struck and damaged a pier and destroyed an oil derrick and a pump house. But the attack's real impact was on local morale. Some Santa Barbara residents fled. Rumors spread that the Ellwood was just a prelude to a larger attack against Los Angeles.

Loyal Japanese Americans in the region had predicted an attack would be made during FDR's radio address, according to historian William A. Goss's 1948 analysis "Air Defense of the Western Hemisphere," a chapter in the first volume of *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, the US Army Air Forces' official history of the air war. Japanese American sources believed a larger attack would be made on Los Angeles shortly thereafter. Blinking lights and even flares had been seen near LA's vital aircraft and defense plants, some people said. Were these signals from secret operatives to would-be attackers? "Los Angeles was darn near in a panic," wrote US Army Lieutenant Donald V. Bennett, a future general whose field artillery battalion had just been sent to California. "...An armada was expected to be off Long Beach within a day or two."

At least one witness claimed, erroneously, that *I-17* had headed south toward LA after shelling the Ellwood oilfield. Other area residents claimed they had seen what they called "signal lights" from out at sea. As a result, a blackout—the mandatory nighttime extinguishment or concealment of all light to make a community invisible to enemy aircraft and, in coastal areas, to ships and submarines offshore—was declared for the Los Angeles area until morning.



A Stage Set for Panic

In this atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, Goss writes, the US Navy announced its belief that an attack was imminent on Southern California and Los Angeles, which was then the fifth-largest city in the United States with a population of about 1.5 million people. At 7:18 p.m. on February 24, military officials put LA's air defenses on alert, only to cancel three hours later. Then, at about 2:15 a.m. on February 25, radar picked up something over the Pacific about 120 miles west of the city. Anti-aircraft units went onto high alert, and a blackout was ordered at 2:21 a.m. By then, the mysterious object had disappeared from radar, but anti-aircraft batteries in and around Los Angeles were put on ready-to-fire status. Emergency centers were already receiving a trickle of telephone calls about enemy planes being spotted.

Air raid alarms sounded and air wardens scurried to their posts. At about 3:15 a.m., the 37th Coast Artillery Brigade began responding to the reports of enemy planes by firing .50-caliber machine guns and 12.8 pound anti-aircraft shells. Planes from the air forces' 4th Interceptor Command were readied to meet incoming enemy aircraft, but they never took off. "The next three hours produced some of the most imaginative reporting of the war," the official air force history says.

Pandemonium in LA

Hundreds of planes were reported over the city, and searchlights played across the sky, highlighting the bursts of anti-aircraft shells, which may themselves have been mistaken for more enemy planes. A coastal artillery colonel reported having spotted "about twenty-five planes at 12,000 feet." Long Beach Police Chief J.H. McClelland said, "I watched what was described as the second wave of planes from atop the seven story Long Beach City Hall. I did not see any planes but the younger men with me said they could. An experienced Navy observer with powerful Carl Zeiss binoculars said he counted nine planes in the cone of the searchlight. The group (of planes) passed along from one battery of searchlights to another, and under fire from the anti aircraft guns, flew from the direction of Redondo Beach and Inglewood on the land side of Fort MacArthur, and continued toward Santa Ana and Huntington Beach. Anti-aircraft fire was so heavy we could not hear the motors of the planes."

Shortly after 3 a.m., reports of a balloon carrying a red flare over Santa Monica came in, and four batteries of anti aircraft artillery opened fire at the sky. Area residents stood on the hills around the city, in front of their homes, on the rooftops, and in the city's streets, watching the spectacle and swapping stories they had heard of planes crashing into the sea and around the city. There were actual reports of four enemy planes being shot down, including one from the 77th street police station that had a Japanese plane crashing in flames at a Hollywood intersection. "There were sirens, searchlights, even antiaircraft guns blamming away," recalled Arthur Ralph Blum, who was nine years old when he witnessed the spectacle. "...I went out onto the upstairs balcony.... It was after three in the morning. Searchlights probed the western sky. Tracers streamed upward. The racket was terrific." Another eyewitness reported, "The air over Los Angeles erupted like a volcano."

Finally, at 7:21 a.m., the all-clear sounded. Local children spent the morning picking up pieces of shrapnel in the streets and on the city's beaches. But there were no enemy planes. Daylight proved

LEFT NATIONAL ARCHIVES. OPPOSITE, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Above: Wartime Los Angeles, home to 1.5 million people. After a tense alert on the evening of February 24, all seemed calm. But at 2:21 a.m. sirens screamed as the army imposed a blackout. Radar had detected something offshore. Opposite: Around 3:15 a.m., anti-aircraft guns opened fire. In this photo, the bright blob left of center is a shell-burst. The other bright spots are stars, doubled by double exposure.

ATTACKS REAL AND IMAGINED

If Japan or Germany had decided to attack the US mainland in World War II, Americans would have been ready. Along the nation's east and west coasts and even in the Midwest heartland, civil defense officials made sure civilians practiced and drilled until they knew exactly what to do if enemy bombers appeared overhead.

Such an attack was extremely unlikely, of course, considering how far enemy planes would have to fly to reach their targets. Most reports of imminent Japanese or German attacks on the US mainland came early in the war and turned out to be spurious. New York City, for instance, was ready for the worst on December 9, 1941, two days after the Pearl Harbor attack. Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, newly appointed director of the federal Office of Civilian Defense, had made an unsettling national radio address the previous day. "I want to be realistic," he said regarding the potential Axis threat to the mainland United States. "The situation is serious."

Into this tense atmosphere, reports came in at noon on December 9 that German planes had been spotted off the East Coast and would reach New York City in about two hours. Defense officials called an air raid alert. Radio stations fell silent, schools closed, and police sirens wailed to signal the public (civil defense sirens had not yet been installed). It was a false alarm. No one died as a result of it.

It was perhaps wise that Americans kept at least some degree of caution about enemy attacks, however, because on a few rare occasions, attacks—like the Japanese submarine *I-17*'s shelling of the Ellwood Oil Field near Santa Barbara, California, on February 23, 1942—were quite real. Later in 1942, for example, the Japanese sub *I-25* made a pair of small air attacks in Oregon that were dubbed the Lookout Air Raids. In June, it used its guns to bombard Fort Stevens at the mouth of the Columbia River—to little effect.

Then, in September, the sub launched its Yokosuka E14Y seaplane (a "Glen" in US parlance) on a failed bombing raid that was meant to start a forest fire in the Siskiyou State Forest near Brookings. Howard "Razz" Gardner, manning a fire lookout tower on Mount Emily, saw the plane fly in and saw smoke afterward. He and another lookout-tower man contained the fire until a larger crew arrived and extinguished it. Little damage was done. The bombing attempt was repeated on the 29th, but with no success.

Later in the war, in 1944 and 1945, Japan released more than 9,000 bomb-laden paper hydrogen balloons into the jet stream. Air currents carried the balloons across the Pacific to at least 17 US states and to Canada and Mexico. On May 5, 1945, at Bly, Oregon, a pastor's pregnant wife and five Sunday-school children 11 to 14 years old noticed one of these balloons on the ground near a site where they planned to picnic. As they approached it, the balloon's bomb went off, and all were killed. The other potentially deadly balloons caused no harm.

On the East Coast, in addition to infiltration of German spies sent to create chaos and damage war production, there was the very real danger of U-boats. These German submarines posed no real threat to shore communities (except to deliver spies). But from January through August 1942, before the United States organized a successful defense of its coastal waters, U-boats sank more than 600 merchant ships just off American shorelines, sometimes within view from the beach.

APPROACH THE BOMB IN A CROUCHING OR CRAWLING POSITION. PLACE THE SAND BUCKET, UPSET, TO ALLOW A FULL-ARM SWING TOWARD THE BOMB
TRY TO COVER THE BOMB WITH DRY SAND, TO CONFINE IT'S ACTION, SO THAT YOU CAN GET NEAR ENOUGH TO SCOOP IT UP ON THE SHOVEL
WHEN THE BOMB IS UNDER FAIR CONTROL, SCOOP IT UP ON THE SHOVEL, FIRST RIGHTING THE BUCKET, BUT LEAVING SOME SAND IN THE BOTTOM
... IF THE BOMB CAN BE DROPPED FROM A WINDOW TO SOME PLACE WHERE IT CAN BURN OUT WITHOUT HARM.
GET RID OF IT THAT WAY!
OTHERWISE, PUT IT IN THE BUCKET ON TOP OF SAND, COVER IT WITH MORE SAND...
...THEN, HOLDING THE BUCKET ON THE SHOVEL, CARRY IT OUT OF THE HOUSE.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Almost as fanciful as enemy bombers soaring over America was the government's advice on what citizens should do if a bomb actually landed. This comic-book intro to bomb disposal, by Honolulu artist E.J. Stephenson, spells out the process frame by frame.

that none had been brought down in Hollywood or in the Pacific west of the city. No bombs had been dropped, either.

Several buildings in the city had been damaged by anti-aircraft shell fragments, however, and there had been numerous auto accidents on the blacked out streets. Five people had died from falling shrapnel and accidents. One of them, 59 year-old police sergeant E. Larsen, had been killed en route to an air raid post. Two others, including a 63 year-old state military reservist at the wheel of an ammunition truck, had died of apparent heart attacks during the confusion

Three Japanese people, two men and a woman, were arrested at Venice Beach on suspicion of signaling with flashlights near the pier and were turned over to the FBI.

Looking for Answers

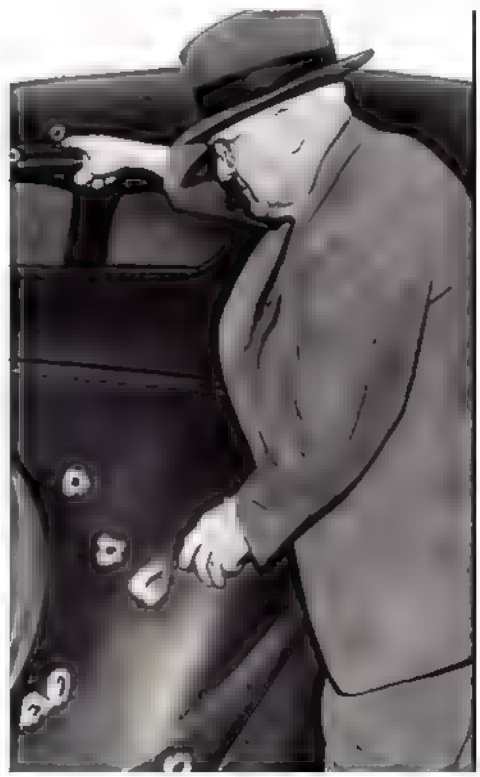
MILITARY AND CIVILIAN officials were as confused as anyone about what had happened. A morning edition of the *Los Angeles Times* blared "Army Says Alarm Real." The newspaper published a picture of a local resident holding a pillow that had been shredded by shrapnel. Another photo showed a resident holding an unexploded 12 pound anti-aircraft shell.

As the city slowly settled back into its normal routine, questions emerged. "Attempts to arrive at an explanation of the incident quickly became as complicated and mysterious as the 'attack' itself," wrote Goss. Some simply blamed "war nerves," which had certainly played a part. But what had triggered the mass hysteria?

US Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox announced that the "attack" had begun with the sighting of what was actually a weather balloon. Once anti aircraft fire began, shell-bursts were themselves mistaken for additional enemy planes. The whole thing was, he said, a "false alarm." At the same time, he admitted that attacks were always possible and urged defense industries to move inland.

Army brass in the area at first declared that "most previous reports had been greatly exaggerated," but then said that one to five "unidentified planes" had been flying over Los Angeles. Secretary of War Henry Stimson seemed to accept the latter explanation and suggested that the "unidentified planes" had been launched from secret Japanese airfields or Japanese submarines. In either case, he said, the planes had been attempting to locate defensive anti-aircraft batteries in the Los Angeles area or simply trying to demoralize the city's population.

Army Chief of Staff General George Marshall suggested the "attack" might have begun with a faulty recognition of commercial aircraft, but was possibly part of a psychological warfare campaign. He wrote a secret memo to Roosevelt trying to explain what had happened.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Daylight showed that the casualties and damage of the "air raid" were caused by accidents, panic—and shrapnel from friendly fire. This LA resident points out holes in his car caused by a shell that exploded near his garage.

FOR YEARS AFTERWARD—and even today—people have claimed the so-called Battle of Los Angeles was started by a UFO sighting. To some eyes, a photo in the *Los Angeles Times* on February 26, 1942, shows a UFO caught in crossing searchlights. Hundreds of witnesses claimed they had seen the object, which reportedly remained motionless over the city and then began moving slowly away. The photo has spawned countless websites and blogs.

As the army and navy fumbled around trying to explain what had happened, newspapers began attacking them, accusing them of a cover-up or outright incompetence. "There is a mysterious reticence about the whole affair and it appears some form of censorship is trying to halt discussion of the matter," said the *Long Beach Independent*, voicing a belief that has further fueled the UFO theory

US Representative Leland Ford of Santa Monica called for a congressional investigation. The *New York Times* chimed in on February 28, saying that if the city's guns had been firing at nothing at all, it was a sign of "expensive incompetence," but if they had been firing at actual enemy planes, why had none been hit? "What would have happened if this had been a real air raid?" the newspaper asked.

In time the recriminations and furor died down. At the end of the war, the Japanese officially claimed that they had never sent any planes over the area on the night of the Great Los Angeles Air Raid.

The most logical explanation of what triggered the event appears to be the weather balloon theory first mentioned by Knox. Goss writes, "A careful study of the evidence suggests that meteorological balloons—known to have been released over Los Angeles—may have caused the initial alarm. After the firing started, careful observation was difficult because of drifting smoke from shell burst.... It is hard to see, in any event, what enemy purpose would have been served by an attack in which no bombs were dropped."

So, weather balloons were reported as enemy planes, guns started to fire, and fear and confusion took over. Sightings multiplied and rumors spread in a city that already "was darn near in a panic," as young Lieutenant Bennett had written. Panic bred panic. ☆

CHUCK LYONS *is a retired newspaper editor and a freelance writer who has written many history articles for national and international periodicals. He lives in Rochester, New York, with his wife, Brenda, and beagle, Gus.*

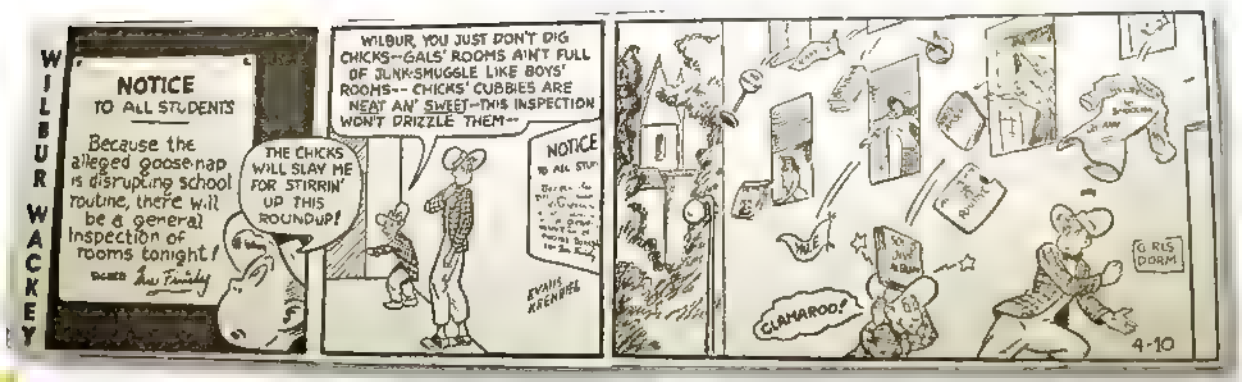
a dirty distraction

Australia banned *Forever Amber*.
The Catholic Church condemned it.

But this sex-filled romance novel proved to be just what many war-weary Americans wanted.

by John E. Stanchak

by John E. Stanchak


WILBUR WACKEY
NOTICE
TO ALL STUDENTS
Because the alleged goose-nap is disrupting school routine, there will be a general inspection of rooms tonight!
THE CHICKS WILL SLAY ME FOR STIRRIN' UP THIS ROUNDUP!
WILBUR, YOU JUST DON'T DIG CHICKS--GALS' ROOMS AIN'T FULL OF JUNK-SMUGGLE LIKE BOYS' ROOMS-- CHICKS' CUBBIES ARE NEAT AN' SWEET--THIS INSPECTION WON'T DRIZZLE THEM--
NOTICE
GLAMAROO!
GIRLS DORM
4-10

SEX. IT'S NOT THE FIRST WORD THAT COMES TO MIND when you think of the American home front of World War II. There were red, white, and blue flags everywhere, and scrap drives, war-bond rallies, and food rationing. People listened to patriotic speeches, watched war-themed movies, and read articles about noble sacrifices. They really did those things, especially in 1942 and 1943, but by 1944 many of them wanted something else. They wanted diversion. That's when the racy romance novel *Forever Amber* arrived to shock—and satisfy—war-weary citizens.

A rookie novelist from California named Kathleen Winsor was the writer who delivered what the public craved. Her book became a best seller, a topic of national gossip, and a ticket to celebrity for Winsor. The most popular work of fiction of the 1940s, it emphasized sex and portrayed it as a natural, normal desire. It relieved the tedium of war for housewives and soldiers and seared the imaginations of teenagers. The book, the controversy around it, and the personal adventures of the author became the hottest topics on the home front.

What was in the 972 pages of *Forever Amber* that caused such commotion in cities and military camps and on troop ships? According to the attorney general of Massachusetts, who read every word of it and took copious notes, there were 70 references to sexual intercourse, 39 illegitimate pregnancies, 7 mentions of abortions, and 10 descriptions of "women undressing in front of men." In his office, and in the justice departments of the 13 other states that joined in calling for the book to be banned within their jurisdictions, the protectors of public virtue decried the work as filled with marital infidelity, greed, and too many vividly described naked breasts. To make it worse, none of the story's main characters seemed sorry about any of it. But book buyers didn't care what the state attorneys thought. They read on.

The salacious novel told the story of Amber St. Clare, a beautiful and precocious 17th-century teenager from a humble but wholesome English village. St. Clare runs away from home with a Cavalier named Bruce Carlton, a member of the royal entourage with King Charles II as he traveled to London from exile to take the crown. This period in history is remembered as the Restoration, the era following the collapse of the stern, judgmental Puritan government of Oliver Cromwell. In time Charles II became known as the Merry Monarch and his court as a place of loose sexual constraints and high living, the antithesis of the dour Cromwell years.

Gullible 16-year-old Amber gives up her maidenhood to Bruce, expecting that he will take care of her and show her the world. He gives her a lift to London and a place to stay, but repeatedly tells her he will never marry her and they'll have no enduring future together. As he prepares to head to Jamaica for an attempt at privateering, she announces she is pregnant. Bruce gives her a coach, driver, and footman and the weighty sum of 500 pounds. He wishes her good luck and leaves.

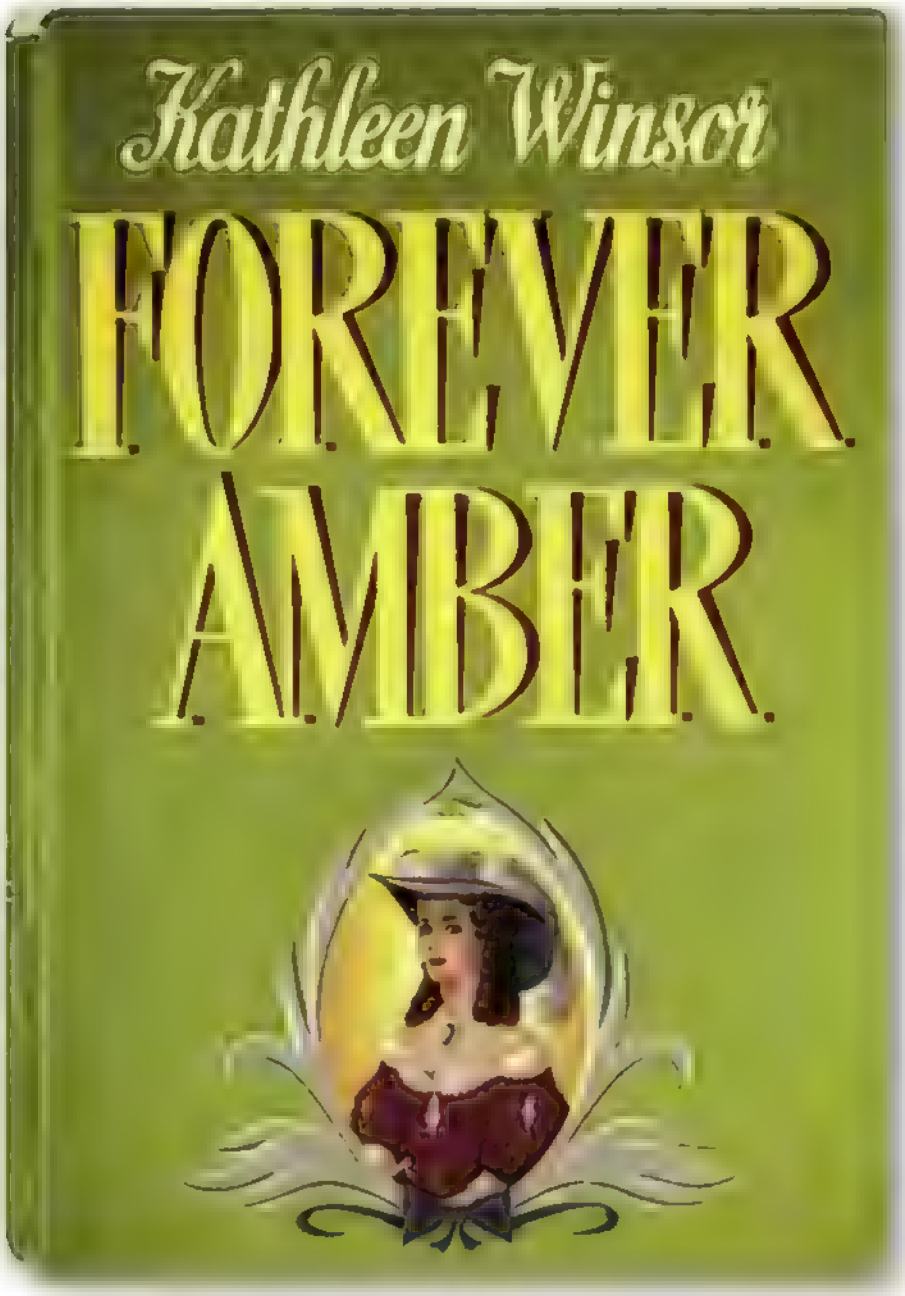
Crushed, Amber falls victim to mother and son con artists and is relieved of her money, ending up in Newgate Prison for debt. There she becomes the plaything of highwayman Black Jack Mallard and escapes with him. After delivering her child in a thieves' den and handing it over to another woman to tend, Amber takes up the criminal arts. A vengeful woman spurned by Black Jack calls in the constables while Jack and Amber are on a job. Amber escapes, but Jack is hanged.

Amber's episodic life continues when she befriends a wealthy

PREVIOUS SPREAD: COURTESY OF WWW.DOCTORMACRO.COM

ABOVE & OPPOSITE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Previous spread: Linda Darnell portrayed the alluring Amber St. Clare in the film version of the racy romance novel *Forever Amber*. To pass the film censors, studio producers had to edit the book's salacious scenes heavily. Above: Although the novel was banned in many states, it had a huge audience. Everyone knew about it and talked about it. Comedians George Burns and Gracie Allen made jokes. Even comic strips, such as the one from the mid-1940s above, referred to it. Right: The 1944 first edition of Winsor's controversial book.

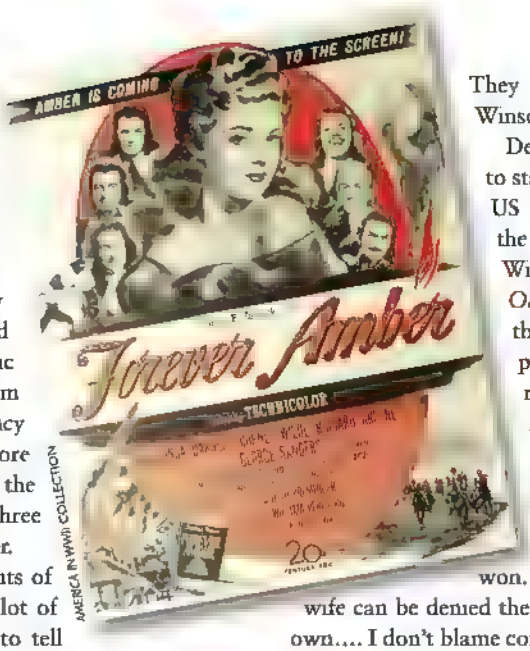


law student, ditches him for better suitors and supporters, becomes an actress, and has a tumble with Charles II. But that's not all. The Great Plague of London strikes in 1665, and a year later, the city burns in the Great Fire. Through it all, Amber remains ambitious—and busy in the boudoir.

Winsor paints an accurate picture of London life in the 1600s—what both the high and low wore, ate, drank, sat on, rode in, danced to, and laughed at. Historians who knew the period intimately praised her research, if not her approach.

No one is redeemed in *Forever Amber*—or wants to be. But readers in wartime America seemed delighted with the honesty of a heroine who says, "Adultery's no crime—it's an amusement." They rooted for her to rise from the gutter by the most convenient and saucy means at hand. Literary critics took shots at Winsor's writing skills, but some immediately grasped the book's appeal. Writing for the *Saturday Review* in 1944, reviewer Arthur D. Howden Smith wrote, "This is the bawdiest novel I have read in years.... This novel is as raw and foul tongued as the years from which it stems. It will offend many people. But it seethes with life. Its action never flags. And you will almost certainly have an opportunity to see it, drastically disinfected, on the screen."

FANS OF THE BOOK did hope for a movie version, but before a single Hollywood executive could make Winsor an offer for the film rights, the Hays Office, which enforced the film industry's Motion Picture Production Code under the direction of Will Hays, said it would not condone a *Forever Amber* movie. The Catholic Church also condemned the book.



AMERICA IN WWII COLLECTION

Accountants at the Macmillan publishing firm in New York City could not have been happier about all the denunciation. The first week *Forever Amber* was in stores, it sold more than 100,000 copies. Macmillan had published Margaret Mitchell's Civil War romance *Gone with the Wind* and knew something about promotion, but it had never received so much help piquing public curiosity about a title as it received from outraged church leaders and public decency organizations for *Forever Amber*. The more the upright people howled, the more the novel sold. Over the years, more than three million copies would pass the cash register.

With all that success, enormous amounts of money came Winsor's way, as well as a lot of public exposure. Magazines were eager to tell her personal story. Born on October 16, 1919, in Minnesota, Winsor was raised in Berkeley, California, the daughter of a real estate man. She attended the University of California–Berkeley and met Bob Herwig of Pomona, captain of the basketball team and a two-time All America center on the football team (which would win the Rose Bowl in 1937). According to University of California alumni publications, Kathleen, the pretty English major, and Bob, the football hero, met in a paleontology class. Their romance took off hot and bright and couldn't be contained. They married on November 27, 1936, when Winsor was 17.

Despite tight budgets, the couple managed to stay in school. Herwig was a member of the US Marine Corps Reserve and looked into the business of coaching college athletics. Winsor became a sports columnist for the *Oakland Tribune* during her senior year. In those days, a woman working in a newspaper's sports department was uncommon, regardless of her talent at the typewriter. Art Cohn, the *Tribune*'s sports editor, was questioned about hiring her. He showed some social foresight when he said, "Women have already won their freedom in this country. They fought and won. Neither Kathleen Herwig nor any other wife can be denied the inalienable right to make a career of her own.... I don't blame contemporaries for getting worried.... For if many more women are discovered who write as well as Mrs. Herwig, a lot of hairy-chested sportswriters will soon be put out of work."

Bob Herwig's senior year at Berkeley included a class assignment on the Restoration. When Winsor perused his research material, she became fascinated with the era. She took up her own reading about Charles II's years on the throne and toyed with ideas for a story. Then the writing began. She kept track of the time she devoted to her project, claiming it totaled more than 4,900 hours.

Romance or Rubbish?

Australia was a United States ally, but that didn't mean the big island country rubber-stamped everything American. *Forever Amber* was a case in point. "I consider it an undesirable book and not an acquisition to the literature of the Commonwealth," said Senator R.V. Keane, Australia's Minister of Customs, after banning sales of the racy novel. On further consideration, he riled himself into a more pointed critique: "The Almighty did not give people eyes to read that rubbish."

Kathleen Winsor's tale of romance so outraged church and state in 1944 because it audaciously introduced sex and then pronounced it pleasurable. In the excerpt below, Amber St. Clare gives up her virginity to Bruce Carlton in a sun-dappled meadow:

She saw his face above her, and his eyes had become pure glittering green. Amber, crying, half-mad with passion and terror, suddenly let herself relax.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Kathleen Winsor was only 25 when *Forever Amber* was published—young for such a huge commercial success.

With slow reluctance Amber became again conscious of the surrounding world, and of both of them as separate individuals. She drew a deep luxurious sigh, her eyes still closed—she felt that she could not have moved so much as a finger.

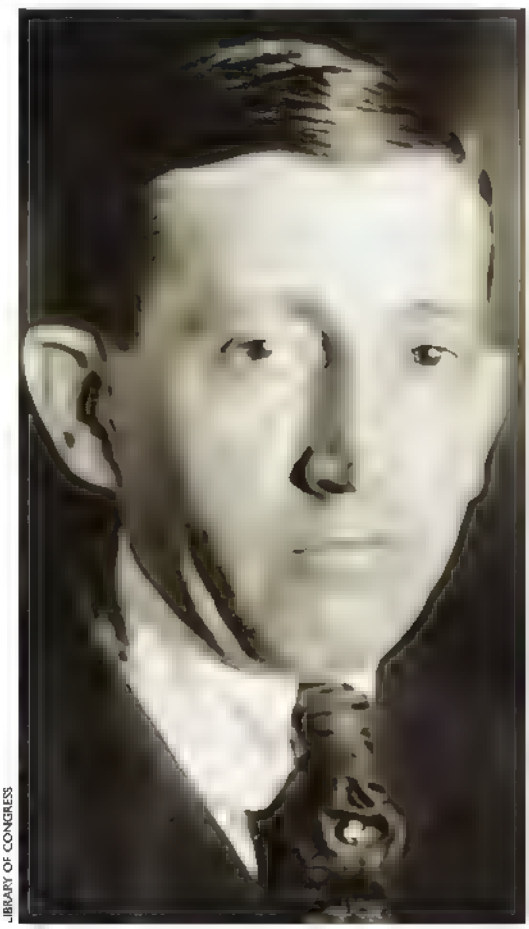
After a long while he drew away from her and sat up, forearms resting on his knees, a long blade of grass between his teeth, staring ahead. His tanned face was wet with sweat and he mopped across it with the black velvet sleeve of his doublet. Amber lay perfectly still beside him, eyes closed and one arm flung over her forehead. She was warm and drowsy, marvelously content, and glad with every fibre of her being that it had happened.

Today, Winsor's prose would be considered mild, blasé. But at a time when Americans were up to their ears in deadly serious conformity, Winsor was taking risks and pushing beyond boundaries. Dissenters notwithstanding, it worked.

by John E. Stanchak

Her manuscript was a tower of paper that Macmillan editors reduced by 80 percent.

The research and writing bridged the end of the couple's college days and the bombing of Pearl Harbor. World War II led Herwig to his own adventures and recognition. Serving as a marine combat officer, he was wounded three times during Pacific island hopping operations. For his efforts, including assaults on the islands of Guam and Okinawa, he was awarded the Navy Cross, the Purple Heart with Gold Star, a US Navy unit citation, and the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal. Keith Topping, a former Stanford football player who served as a marine combat correspondent, knew Herwig and saw him in action. "[He] is the greatest combat leader in the Pacific," Topping said. "It was his company that captured Sugar Loaf Hill on Okinawa after being tossed back three times. The men will do anything for Herwig."



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Above: William H. Hays was president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, and it was that office's Motion Picture Production Code that guided movie studio self-censorship. Hays, a former postmaster general, noted Republican, and Presbyterian elder, monitored the *Forever Amber* film for potentially offensive material. Opposite, top: A poster for the film.

DESPITE BEING a distance from home, Herwig was kept apprised of developments, directly or indirectly. He read about the popularity of *Forever Amber*, about the $200,000 producer Darryl Zanuck eventually paid his wife for the film rights, about the $70,000 Hollywood home she bought with the proceeds, and about the number of times newspapers ran photographs of her in Los Angeles nightclubs with film personalities.

Then the controversy about the bawdiness of the novel reached Herwig's far-off part of the globe. The *Daily News* of Perth, Australia, ran this notice in its August 1, 1945, edition: "The novel 'Forever Amber,' by Kathleen Winsor, has been banned in Australia by the Minister of Customs, Senator Keane." Keane saw himself as being proactive in his duties to protect the morals of Australian readers

A follow-up notice in the newspaper pointed out, "Not more than 50 copies of 'Forever Amber'...are in Australia. No library or bookseller in Sydney has ever had the book for sale or loan. [The] only copies in Australia would have been brought out by American servicemen or posted from America to friends here, said a leading bookseller." After that, US servicemen were asked not to bring the novel into the country, though they quietly ignored the request. Australian troops liked a ripping good read as much as the next fellow. And so, it seemed, did the rest of the world. *Forever Amber* was eventually translated into 23 languages.

All this news might have proved distressing to a less self-confident husband than Herwig. But even though his wife wrote about a woman living by her own wiles and doing whatever she wanted, she also wrote of her heroine's unending ardor for her first love. Perhaps that's what he chose to keep in mind when he returned from the Pacific.

Unfortunately, the author's first love came home to nobody—Winsor was out wandering in search of inspiration. When Herwig was asked what his and his wife's plans were, he responded, "We're going to keep our careers separate." There had been rumors that Winsor was playing the field while Herwig was at war. When this real life bit of naughty business appeared in the gossip columns of America's newspapers, it caused some of Winsor's loyal readers to turn on her. There were also sightings of Winsor with famous big band leader Artie Shaw, husband of the smoldering film actress Ava Gardner.

Winsor and Herwig began divorce proceedings, and Winsor ran off to Juarez, Mexico, with Shaw to get married in 1946. Unfortunately, Shaw had not completed his divorce from Ava, and he was subsequently charged with bigamy. The Winsor-Shaw marriage was brief, but Winsor prevailed in the end—by marrying her divorce lawyer. In the years to come, Winsor would again divorce and marry.

Thanks to the dramatic love life, Winsor remained in the public's mind, which helped fuel interest in the movie version of *Forever Amber* when it appeared in 1947. The Technicolor film starred Linda Darnell as Amber, Cornel Wilde as Bruce, and George Sanders as Charles II.

Winsor wrote several novels after *Forever Amber*, but none came close to equaling her first success. Decades after the raciness of that book was surpassed by other dramas more descriptive and downright dirty, Winsor elaborated on her writing process for it. "I wrote only two sexy passages, and my publishers took both of them out," she said in an interview. "They put ellipses [in] instead. In those days, you know, you could solve everything with an ellipsis." ★

JOHN E. STANCHAK *writes frequently for* America in WWII. *His most recent article was a photo essay in our August 2014 issue that told of his father's adventures with the US Navy.*

WAR STORIES

A WWII Scrapbook

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

THANKS FOR THE SHOW, MICKEY

DURING THE WAR, I served with the 292nd Combat Engineers in the Ninth Army. One day, after the Battle of the Bulge, some of us were in Merkstein, Germany, when a jeep arrived with two helmeted GIs in it. To our surprise, they weren't just regular soldiers, but actors. Although I'm ashamed to admit that I've forgotten the one entertainer's name, I can't forget the other guy. It was none other than Mickey Rooney.

These guys took over the vacant town hall and put on a great show for us. After raising our morale sky-high, Mickey and his pal shook hands all around and left to visit more troops. And it was back to the war for us.

Off and on for more than 60 years I tried to thank Mickey for that show. I tried his mailing address and wrote to newspapers and magazines, but he seemed to hop around like a flea on a griddle.

Henry T. Smith
wartime private first class with the 292 Combat Engineers, Ninth Army
East Hartford, Connecticut

Editor's note: *While thanks are being sent out, we'll put our condolences out there, too: Mr. Rooney, a wartime army enlistee, died earlier this year, on April 6.*

DECEMBER 7 CHANGED EVERYTHING

ON DECEMBER 7, 1941, I was a boy of nine, living in Brookings, South Dakota. My family and my cousin's family were noon dinner guests at my grandparents' house. After dinner, my cousin Jimmy and I were each given a quarter and allowed to walk downtown to go to a movie. On the way we ran into my brother-in-law, Herb, talking excitedly with some men outside a cigar store. He told us that Pearl Harbor had been bombed by the Japanese and this meant the country would be at war. On that fateful Sunday we didn't really grasp the importance of the attack. Jimmy and I just went to the movie as planned.

But it wasn't long before the war affected the entire family. Herb joined the navy and moved to Pensacola, Florida, with my sister for the duration. One of Herb's brothers also joined the navy, and another joined the army and was killed. Meanwhile, Jimmy's family moved to Portland, Oregon, where his dad worked building warships. They never returned to South Dakota. Other cousins of mine, living in Minnesota, joined the navy.

My dad did not go into the service. He continued to run his wholesale candy and tobacco business. But his business suffered because candy and tobacco manufacturers had most of their products routed to the armed forces

I did my part for the war effort by growing a 4-H Victory garden and participating in Boy Scout metal salvage drives. I also used part of my allowance to buy saving stamps toward the purchase of war bonds.

Denton E. Morrison
wartime boy on the home front
Sarasota, Florida

GRATEFUL PACIFIC SURVIVOR

MY GOOD FRIEND Fred Harrell once lived his life on the unforgettable, razor-sharp edge of death—and is grateful to God every day for it. A soldier with the

Above: Mickey Rooney gets a laugh out of GIs in Germany in April 1945. A childhood and teen Hollywood superstar, Rooney joined the army in 1944, entertaining troops in person and by radio. He received a Bronze Star for doing shows at the front.

PHOTO BY JACK DELANO, MAY 1943 LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Student Bayleh Feder saw Chicago mobilize for war. Here, trucks unload army supplies at an Illinois Central Railroad depot.

96th Infantry Division during World War II, Fred fought on Leyte and Okinawa. He told me he was part of an infantry rifle outfit known as the Dead Eye Division. "I was with some pretty tough guys," he told me. "But it was scary for all of us. I was scared to death a lot of times but, thank God, I was never hurt."

Fred recalled that one night he was in a foxhole with a Polish boy from Chicago. "He kept saying he was going to die," Fred said. "He was on his knees praying all night. The next morning we went off at 8:00. He was the first one I saw killed in that attack.

"We'd look at guys and wonder who might not go into a fight. But scared or not, everybody would go. They didn't want to let their buddies down, so they'd go.

"At a time like that I always prayed, 'Lord, if this is it, please make it fast.' Some of our guys were captured and forced to work in Toyota and Mitsubishi war plants in Japan. They were worked hard, and some of them were tortured to death.

"I think of these things every day. I think about some of the guys who didn't come back. The war never goes away. I must have made it through the grace of God. I am grateful to God every day."

Raymond T. Thomas
wartime private first class,
34th Station Hospital, Rome, Italy
Linton, Indiana

COLLEGE LIFE IN A WAR TOWN

I WAS IN COLLEGE studying to be a teacher when World War II changed life for all US citizens. Male students, now drafted, came home on leave to tell us about their sad and dangerous experiences while serving in Europe and the Pacific.

Female students weren't drafted, but we were permitted to graduate several months early from Chicago Teachers College so we could begin teaching while our young men were in service. In addition, we did volunteer service, such as in hospitals and senior residences.

As I traveled around Chicago, there wasn't one home I passed that didn't have a star flag in a window to indicate someone once lived there who was now in the military

When the war ended, many former soldiers went back to school on the GI Bill. One man in uniform became my husband of more than 59 years. To this day I still carry in my wallet a picture of him from those war years. He was a proud and grateful American.

Bayleh Feder
wartime college student and teacher
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

AMERICA IN WWII LINGO!

1940s GI and civilian patter

no-ball: army air forces code for a bombing run on a German V-1 rocket launch site.

Ameche: a telephone, as in "I'll talk to you later on the Ameche." Named for actor Don Ameche, who played inventor Alexander Graham Bell in a 1939 movie.

flub the dub: to dodge your duty or shirk work, as in "I flubbed the dub to get to an Ameche and call my girl, but Sarge caught me."

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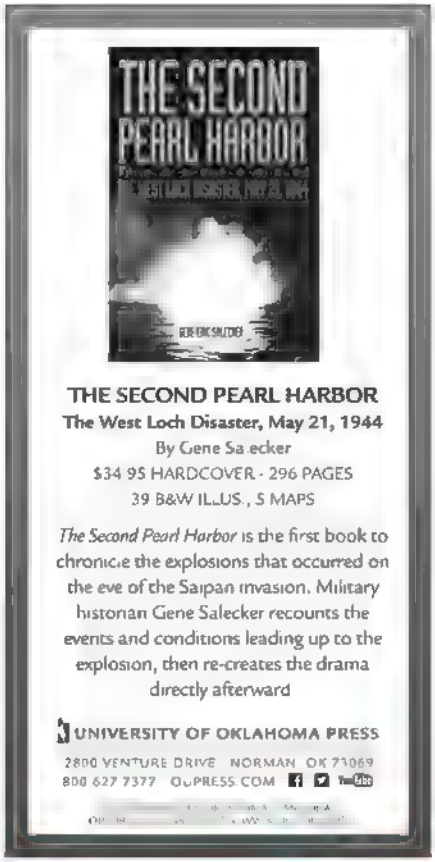

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I WAS THERE

Denied a Silver Star

by Edward T. Sobczyk • as told to Edward G. Longacre

PHOTO COURTESY OF EDWARD T. SOBCZYK. SILVER STAR COURTESY OF THE AUDIE MURPHY MEDALS COLLECTION

EDWARD THOMAS SOBCZYK *had every intention of collecting a federal government paycheck someday. As one thing led to another, he wound up getting that check. He just hadn't realized that it would come through the US Army.*

Sobczyk, who was born into a large Polish American family in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1919, wanted to be a government meteorologist. After he graduated from Omaha South High School, he took work as an accountant for a local firm as he awaited the opportunity to get into his chosen field. Then the United States was pulled into the world war, and in early 1942 he was inducted into the US Army's Enlisted Reserve Corps. For six months he served in the 30th Infantry Division, and later in the year, he was

Above: On leave from the 12th Infantry Regiment, Private First Class Ed Sobczyk visits his mom at home in Omaha, Nebraska, where kids are playing on the porch. Inset: In 1944, the young infantryman—known as Omaha to his army buddies—might have worn a Silver Star like this one (Audie Murphy's, with bronze oak leaf cluster) if not for an embarrassing tragedy the army wanted to forget.

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I WAS THERE

transferred to Company M of the 12th Infantry, a component of the 4th Division.

Prior to D-Day, Corporal Ed Sobczyk, who pronounces his family name SOB-ject, joined a detail of several men who were trained and equipped to knock out German positions in advance of the Normandy landings that would happen in June 1944. Late in April Sobczyk's unit took part in Operation Tiger, a live-fire exercise conducted on Slapton Sands, off the coast of Devon, England, designed to simulate the upcoming invasion. Due to a lack of coordination among the forces involved, friendly fire killed dozens of GIs. The debacle attracted a few of the small and fast German crafts known as E-boats in Lyme Bay, which torpedoed three LSTs (Landing Ships, Tank) filled with troops. In all, almost 750 servicemen lost their lives.

Historians would be skeptical of anyone claiming he helped rescue 100 or more comrades from a damaged LST no more than two miles off the English coast, but Sobczyk's memory of doing so is as sharp as if it had happened yesterday. Recommended for the Silver Star for his effort, he was denied the decoration once Allied commanders strove to minimize publicity about the disaster. He was bold enough to ask Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower, during a troop briefing shortly before D-Day, about the withholding of the medal. Eisenhower replied in a way that ended discussion of the subject.

On June 6, Sobczyk's detail landed on Utah Beach, where it called in naval gunnery that took out enemy artillery and troop concentration points. A week later, he shrugged off a wound received during the operation to aid his division's assistant commander, Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., in rescuing an officer who had fallen wounded beyond US lines. In later weeks Sobczyk served as a scout for his own outfit and other regiments of the 4th Division—the 8th and 22nd Infantry. On June 21, now a sergeant, he volunteered to help secure a supply of rations that lay between the lines. Returning from that task, 6 members of his 10-man detail were killed, and he was severely wounded in the right arm, shoulder, and leg. Amputation of his leg appeared inevitable.

MY REGIMENT, THE 12TH INFANTRY, shipped out in January of '44 from Camp Kilmer, New Jersey [the staging area for the New York Port of Embarkation]. The first place we hit was Belfast, Ireland, but we never

When Germans torpedoed Allied LSTs (Landing Ships, Tank) during a 1944 exercise off England, Sobczyk rescued drowning men. Recommended for the Silver Star, he was denied due to silence about the incident. LST-289 (below) was a victim of the attack.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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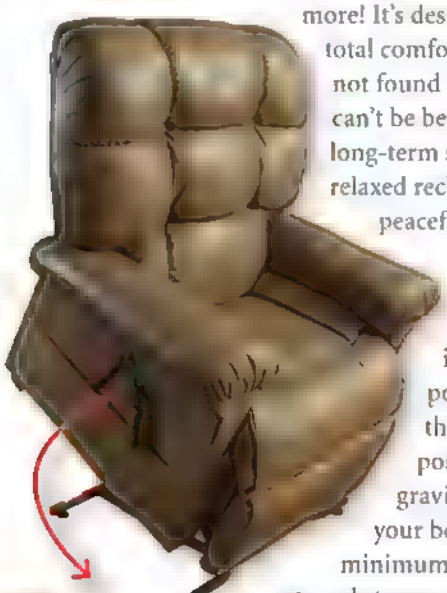

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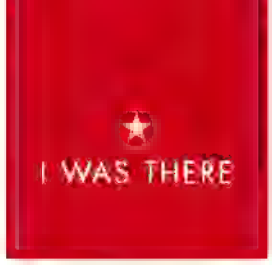

fully debarked there, and our next stop was over in England. We were stationed in Exeter and later in Plymouth. We knew we were getting into some kind of amphibious maneuver, but we didn't know exactly what it was. We didn't know anything about D-Day at that time, but we had trained for it. When in the States we had to be able to swim 100 yards and run 10 miles. In Tennessee we learned to climb mountains [on either side of the Cumberland River] with, and later without, a rope harness. This training wasn't for all the troops in my regiment, just a group of 12 or 15 of us, part of a detail for special service.

The regiment went to Slapton Sands in LSTs. Our advance detail went ashore in a Higgins boat [on April 28, 1944], and we no more got on shore when I heard a loud explosion. I didn't know what it was, but I turned around to see that Lieutenant [Earl R.] Thompson was waving at us to come on back. He was one of those who had trained with us most of the time. We went back in the Higgins boat. I don't remember how long we traveled—maybe 30 or 40 minutes—until we hit the spot where our LST was maybe a mile and a half offshore. It had been hit, but it wasn't damaged too badly.

When we got there, there was quite a few GIs, a couple hundred, maybe, in the water. [Sergeant Joseph] Bethke, Thompson, and I went into the water. We had these waist jackets—lifesaver deals—on, and we started taking out [all] the injured that we could. We were able to get up to the top of the rope ladder, and we helped them climb into the LST. Another guy, [Sergeant John] Landau, was holding the rope down in the water so they could climb up it. Those too badly wounded we put in the Higgins boat.

When we were on the rope ladder, the surf was real heavy, and we would fly out on the ladder about four, five, six feet, and it would slam us against the side of the boat. Bethke and I were the last two going up the ladder. I just laid down on the deck and, I mean, I was out. I slept for hours, Bethke said 12. Bethke later told me we saved anywhere between 100 and 200 men. But there were a lot of them that drowned, floating face down in their life vests. Some of them [the vests] were not put on right, but my understanding was that the little gadgets inside of them that were to release gas to inflate them didn't work.

We stayed on the boat for the next day or two and we were awarded [recommended for] the Silver Star by Captain [Michael] Mahalik [commanding Company M of the 12th]. We didn't receive it at all. We received nothing.

After I woke up, we went down to Plymouth. That's when we learned we were going ashore at Utah Beach. A few days before the invasion, around the 3rd or 4th of June, we had a briefing from General Eisenhower. It was held in an open field, and there were a lot of soldiers from other units there, too. Only Bethke, Thompson, and I, and perhaps Captain [James P.] Smith, were there from the 12th Regiment. We had special orders to be there. Eisenhower did most of the talking.

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He was telling us what we were up against, where we were going, and everything we needed to know. Thompson, Bethke, and I were in the front line of soldiers. When Eisenhower was all through with his talk, he wanted to know if there were any questions from anybody, and Bethke and I, the both of us, said how about our Silver Stars for Slapton Sands? Already our commander told us that Eisenhower had taken them away [didn't approve them]. So we asked him and his remark was, if I brought that up again, we were going to be court-martialed. No one else asked a question. The talk broke up right there and then.

It was just starting to get light when our detail went ashore on Utah Beach [on June 6]. This is what we had trained for in the States and England. We went in ahead of the main landings. Our job was to knock out the big guns—there were several of them—and to blow the dams that made the moats the Germans had dug on the beach. One moat in front of us was about 20 or 30 feet deep, and we had to cross it. I was loaded down with so much stuff. I was carrying a radio on my back. So was Bethke.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Men of the 4th Division's 8th Infantry Regiment, sister unit to Sobczyk's 12th Infantry, find shelter behind a Utah Beach seawall on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Sobczyk landed on Utah with a task force assigned to destroy heavy guns and demolish dams that flooded the beach.

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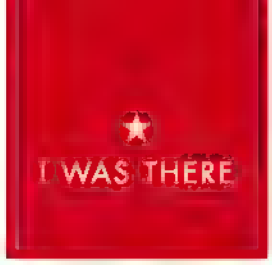

The radio kept us in contact with the battleship—I think it was the *Nevada*—that we called heavy artillery fire from.

Captain Smith, who I knew when he was a second lieutenant back in the States, was with us. I called him the Airplane because he was about six feet six or seven. While stationed at [Fort Gordon in] Augusta, Georgia, I had been telling some GIs tales about rattlesnakes and prairie dogs in Omaha. He came up to me and said, "If bullshit was music, you'd be a brass band. I come from Blair, Nebraska," only 30 miles from my home, and he knew better. Now he helped me get across that moat. He handed me the butt of his rifle and he pulled me practically across the moat. Afterward he put his arm around me and said, "God be with you. I want you to come back from this." I said, "Yeah, I'll be back. Don't worry about me, captain." Then, as I remember, he sent four or five men down to try to figure out where the dam was and how to blow it up.

Bethke and I went on with our field glasses and radios into a German trench on high ground, and we looked down on a little town which had a church. In front of the church was a big orange cover or tarp. At first we thought it was covering for a haystack, but later we saw it was covering up the bodies of paratroopers [of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions]. Some Germans came out of the church, which was their headquarters, and formed a firing squad and shot two more paratroopers and threw the bodies under the orange cover. Then, using our maps, we called in the coordinates to the battleship. One of the first [1,500-pound] shells hit the back end of the church. It emptied out, and five German officers with rifles in their hands drove off in an open car within about 10 feet of us, heading for Cherbourg. We were in a high trench and they didn't see us. We didn't fire on them. Bethke said it was not our job to take them out. Our job was to get rid of these big guns on the coast.

Before we called in more shells, I found a brown sack in the trench with some bread and cheese in it. When I looked inside, a sniper in a tree shot me in the head. The shot went between my metal helmet and the plastic liner, and the liner cut my head pretty bad. Bethke fixed up my headgear and put a little sulfa powder on [the wound] and a bandage over it and pulled my helmet back on. Then we both fired at the sniper and left him hanging from the tree. Bethke said he shot him, and I said I did, so it was a toss up. Next we called in shells on an ammo dump about 200 yards from the church and a coast gun another 200 yards away. We asked them [the navy] to give us a little time to get out of there, because we knew what was going to happen. [Both positions were eliminated.]

After about two days of this, a navy captain came to Bethke and me with a radio operator, and they relieved us from calling in to the ship. We then went back and picked up the baggage we left on the beach and tried to get in contact with our regiment. I don't know how long it took us to catch up with them, but we finally did.

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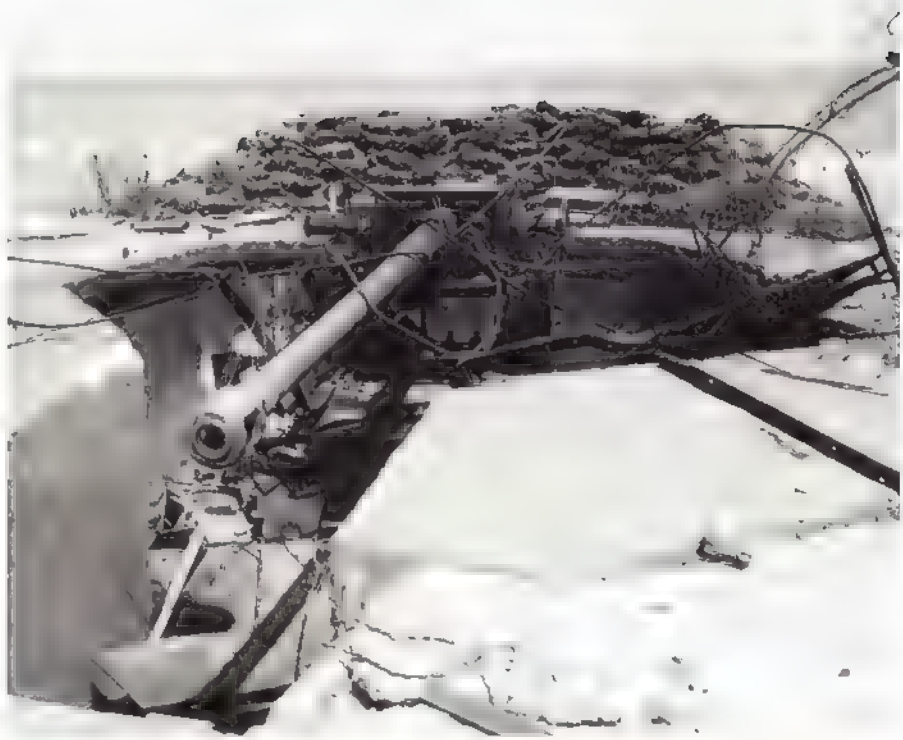
From then on my job and Bethke's was scouting to see what the Germans had ahead of us, to see if we were going to have to pull back or not.

We had pushed pretty far inland [by June 11]. I went over to see if I could help Colonel Reeder [Russell P. "Red" Reeder, Jr., commander of the 12th Infantry, who had been severely wounded in the ankle by shrapnel]. He was lying beside a hedgerow with a tourniquet around his leg. I wanted to help him, but he said no, the medics were helping him, but "what you *can* do is get the men off the road here before the Germans begin dropping shells on them." They were bringing up 75 or 100 replacements on this road, and the sergeant in charge had a nervous breakdown right then and there. I took charge and cleared the road and got the guy back to our headquarters [for medical attention].

One week after we landed, Bethke, me, and others went out on a surveillance with Lieutenant [George D.] Rees of our company. Rees, who I knew from two stints at Fort Dix [in New Jersey], was out in front of the patrol and he got wounded, shot in



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

This German coastal gun, sitting abandoned in a burned-out emplacement at Fort de Foucarville on France's Normandy coast, was destroyed by American infantrymen moving inland from the D-Day landing beaches. Neutralizing guns like this was one of Sobczyk's tasks.

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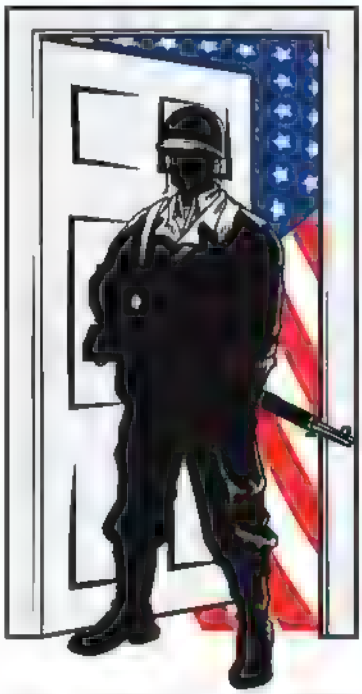

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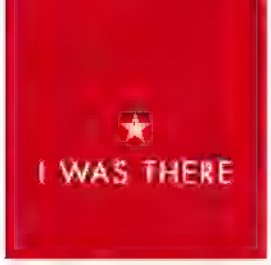
the chest. Bethke and I got him into a German foxhole. We used our morphine [syringes] on him—we carried them in our belts—and we told him we would get him out of there and back to our unit as soon as it got dark. It was then about 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon.

We left him there, but then this general comes up. It was General Roosevelt. He was quite a soldier, even at his age [56]. He wanted to talk with a sergeant they called Omaha. I said, that's me, and he said, "We can get Lieutenant Rees back now and I'll show you how to do it." I said okay and the two of us started out. Right away the Germans threw a volley over our heads and the general hit the ground. He turned to me and said, "Okay, Omaha, we're gonna do it your way." So we waited till night and four of us—Bethke, [Sergeant Delbert H.] Cress, [Sergeant "Smiley"] Howard, and myself took our rifles and raincoats and made a stretcher and carried him off. The medics took him back, and as far as I know he survived his wound. [Roosevelt, however, would die on July 12 of a heart attack.]

On June 21 Bethke and I came back to the regiment from a reconnaissance. We had been almost surrounded by the Germans, but [1st Sergeant John] Gostain took me aside and asked if I could get back through the lines and get some rations to the troops, because they hadn't eaten all day. I said, "Yeah, I'll go get six volunteers." Instead, I got 10. I took all 10 with me. We found the abandoned supply trucks, got the food and water, but on the way coming back the Germans got on our flank near Terville [Tourlaville], and they had control of the road to the rear of us. They opened up on us with artillery, either 105s or 88s [105mm or 88mm guns]. The next thing I knew, I was flying probably 10 feet through the air.

I didn't remember anything for two days. When I woke up, a dog was licking my face and I tried to see what was going on around me. I was in what looked like a cemetery. It was a temporary burial place. Bodies were piled all around me. I later learned that six men of my patrol had been killed, and I was listed as being killed, too. I knew I had to get to some place to get help in a hurry, so I began crawling out from the piles. Then I heard a familiar voice. It was a medic from another unit in the division. I knew him from the States



We used to play cards together. His name was something like Appalachee, but he was so big I called him Two Dozen. I called out his nickname, and he came over and got me out of there and put dressings on my wounds. He got in touch with my unit, and Bethke and Gostain came over and put me in a foxhole until the next morning, when I could be evacuated.

The next thing I remember was waking up in a C-47 [Douglas Skytrain transport plane] flying across the Channel to a hospital in London. In the hospital a doctor told me they were going to have to take off my leg, which was filled with shrapnel—said

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

In Normandy, Sobczyk met Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. (seen in France in 1918, during World War I)—the only general to hit the beach in D-Day's first wave.

they would do it the next day. I said, well, if that's the way it has to be. It was all black and it hurt like crazy. Later that day another doctor, a colonel named Graybull, comes along and says he's from Omaha. His dad owned an air products company I used to do business with, though I never knew him

personally. He asked me if he could look at the leg and then he said, "You know what, I'm going to stop that operation. We can save that leg." He said here was a strong pulse in the leg and good circulation. I told him he was my best friend.

He stopped the operation and, the next day, they took out the rods they had put in my leg and sewed it back up. They did it without anesthetics. I don't know if they were [temporarily] out of them or what. The nurse was real nice about it. She put a towel in my mouth so I could bite on it the whole time during the operation. I was in the hospital for about four weeks. They strapped my right arm—which they took shrapnel out of—to my body so I couldn't use it at all, and my shoulder was torn loose, but when they operated on my arm, they deadened it. The nurses showed me how to use my left arm till it got better. Eventually everything healed up pretty much, though I'm still drawing disability on both arm and leg.

When I got out of the hospital and back to the regiment, I found that Bethke had been shot and killed on a patrol while I was gone. Gostain, who had taken a 2nd lieutenant's rating, was going out on a reconnaissance with Lieutenant Thompson. I realized what they were getting into because the Germans in the area outnumbered us probably 20 to 1. I wanted to go with them because Gostain had never gone out on a patrol before, but he said, "No, I'm going to do it," and he insisted that I stay and help another guy interrogate some prisoners. Gostain was killed on that patrol.

Sobczyk's return to active duty proved less hazardous than his earlier service—though it might have been otherwise. In August 1944 Sobczyk accompanied the 12th Infantry in liberating Paris. Subsequently the regiment took part in the fierce fighting in the Hurtgen Forest, along the German-Belgian border. A few days before the Germans attacked the 12th's sector at the outset of the Battle of the Bulge, the 12th was pulled out of the line and sent to the rear, escaping the brunt of the enemy onslaught and the heavy casualties.

Sobczyk spent the rest of the war in Belgium and Luxembourg, returning to the States in June 1945. He insists that he was confined for a week at Camp Kilmer,

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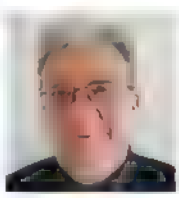

Torsten Granov, MA Director of International Military History. Has written a number of books and has lectured about WW2 and Nazi Germany. Specialist in WW2 and in D-day and Normandy.

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By E M Owsiany

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though the incident remains shrouded in mystery. He said his offense was revealing details of Operation Tiger to other GIs on the voyage home.

Finally released upon his pledge to give no further publicity to the Slapton Sands disaster, he returned to Omaha. His transition to civilian life was difficult. For weeks he slept in uniform, mostly on the floor of his bedroom with a loaded revolver nearby.

COURTESY OF EDWARD T. SOBCZYK

Sobczyk went to war as the upbeat young GI in this stateside portrait. He returned haunted by the realities of ground combat.

He carried the gun for months until his wife, Bernadine, made him lock it away. At 94 he still suffers from an occasional nightmare rooted in his many harrowing experiences and memories of the buddies who failed to accompany him home from the war. ★

EDWARD G. LONGACRE, *a retired historian for the Department of Defense, has written numerous books and articles on the Civil War, World War II, and military aviation.* *In editing this account he was assisted by Ed Sobczyk's nieces, JoAnn Bartolomei and Mary Kay Brown, and Bartolomei's daughter Anna. He also thanks Michael E. Lynch, research historian at the US Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.*

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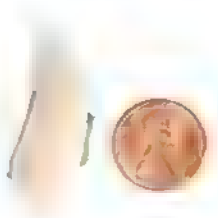

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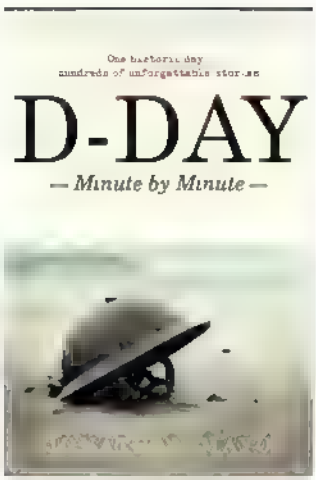
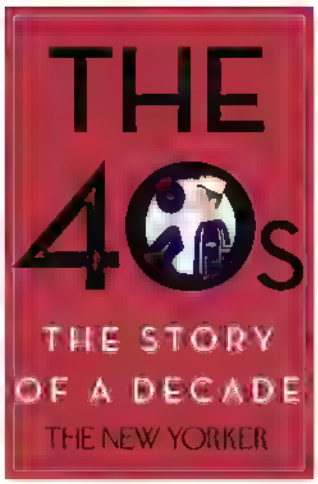
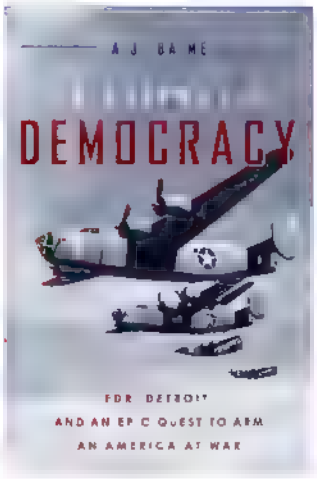
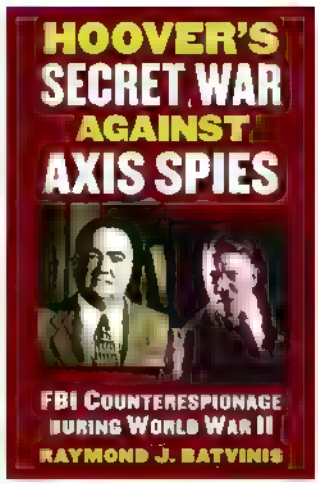
BOOKS AND MEDIA









D-Day: Minute by Minute
by Jonathan Mayo,
Marble Arch Press, 304 pages, $25

THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR of the Normandy landings is a great time to be reading its history. We have not only the classics from which to choose, but many new titles as well. Early books, such as Cornelius Ryan's *The Longest Day* (1959), memorably capture the bravado and drama of the invasion's early hours. In the years since, writers from Max Hastings to Anthony Beevor and Rick Atkinson have given us narratives detailing the planning, landing, advance, and fallout from the coastal attacks. These studies mix action with insightful analysis, elegantly weaving together events surrounding heavyweights such as General Dwight Eisenhower and German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel as well as grunts in the field. In *D-Day: Minute by Minute*, author Jonathan Mayo takes a different approach from that of these later authors. In the opening pages of his book, he eschews the high-level perspective of most modern writers in favor of an older, more immediate style, reminiscent of earlier writers.

Mayo focuses exclusively on June 6, 1944, the day the Normandy landings began. His is a strictly chronological account that is broken down into precise increments of time. He records events as they occurred—minute by minute, as his book's title says. To do this he relies on an archive of WWII oral history that the British Imperial War Museum began in 1972. He casts a wide net of perspectives, encompassing recollections of American, British, Canadian, French, and German participants. The effect is a ground level view from all sides.

This is a book about characters, and many familiar ones appear, with cameos of President Franklin Roosevelt, Soviet Premier Josef Stalin, and Generals Eisenhower and Omar Bradley. Mayo includes many other names that resonate from the era Working for *Collier's* magazine, Ernest Hemingway rolled ashore in his gruff, well equipped style at the tail end of the invasion, while army sergeant J.D. Salinger landed on Utah Beach with the early chapters of *Catcher in the Rye* in his backpack. A pre-*Star Trek* James Doohan (Scotty) landed on the Canadian Juno Beach with thousands of pounds in gambling winnings. Famed wartime photographer Robert Capa went ashore during the first frantic minutes of the landings to capture the drama on film, but, says Mayo, errors made during the developing process ruined all but 11 of his pictures. Much of this is interesting. Some is trivial, as when we read that Eisenhower was awakened for an invasion force update or that Rommel's wife discovered that the shoes he bought in Paris for her birthday didn't fit.

Many readers will find the accounts from French civilians interesting. Cultural friction was predictable, but Mayo includes lesser-known episodes, such as when an Allied corpsman counseled a French woman to get more bed rest. She slapped him for his advice. He gave her morphine and moved on. A French farmer protested when wandering Allied soldiers ate his strawberries, grumbling that the Germans had never done that in four years.

Mayo's use of Axis viewpoints alternates between the well travelled and well known, such as General of Artillery Erich Marcks—who attended war games and predicted the location for the Allied landings—and the less familiar, such as medic Fritz Muller, who went out on the night of the invasion looking for injured Americans. Perhaps the most memorable of these is the plucky E-boat commander Heinrich Hoffmann, who led two torpedo boats that penetrated the invasion fleet, launched his attacks, then continued sailing. Many Germans saw opportunity, not disaster, in the Allied landings.

One cannot discuss more than the strik-

ing moments of *D-Day: Minute by Minute* because Mayo explicitly excludes anything else. He tells us, "This is not a book about military strategy." Consequently, we learn little about the logistics; the debates among Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Stalin about the second front; the disinformation campaign; the evolution of British General Bernard Montgomery's invasion plans; the air war; or the agonies of coalition warfare.

In fact, Mayo's self circumscribed approach harkens back to one of the earliest writers on Normandy, Cornelius Ryan, and his classic *The Longest Day*. Mayo even includes some of that earlier book's anecdotes. With this approach, Mayo successfully re-creates the immediacy and chaos of the invasion's onset.

So in the heady season of new books on D Day, where does Mayo's fit best? With its very approachable treatment and its personal, anecdotal focus, it will be an appealing first book for younger readers or beginning students of World War II. Readers seeking a recounting more vivid than the usual will also find this punchy collection of minute-by-minute micro-memoirs rewarding

THOMAS MULLEN
Flemington, New Jersey

The 40s: The Story of a Decade
introduction by David Remnick, Random House, 720 pages, $30

THE OVERWHELMING IMPRESSION left on the reader after examining *The 40s: The Story of a Decade*, an anthology of articles from the *The New Yorker*, is elegance. From the magazine's inception in February 1925, founder and editor in chief Harold Ross intended for his publication to be light, humorous, and high-minded without *seeming* high-minded. He published fiction, reviews, and artwork, and he worked hard to make the weekly stylish. He intentionally kept politics out of his pages—until the 1940s.

The forties proved to be a pivotal decade for the magazine and for the quirky Ross, who survived on "unfiltered cigarettes, poker chips, and Scotch," writes David Remnick in the book's introduction. Ross once famously asked, "Is Moby Dick the man or the whale?" That quip and other similar flubs caused some to consider him a lightweight and a rube. Even so, Ross managed to harness an impressive stable of writers that included James Thurber, E.B. White, Lillian Ross, Dorothy Parker, Ed mund Wilson, John Cheever, and J.D. Salinger. Not bad for a rube.

As conflict stirred in Europe and Asia during the thirties, impending war became the elephant in the room for *The New Yorker*. Remnick writes, "The magazine did not figure out how to respond fully to such events until the forties." The result was brilliant journalism, insightful observations, and dry wit, and this anthology, writes Remnick, "represents *The New Yorker*'s greatest turn, its journalistic, artistic, and political awakening."

In the midst of world conflict, Ross showed himself to be a genius. He told writers he didn't want to know what *they* thought of the war; he wanted to know what *everyday people in faraway places* thought of it. Remnick writes, "[Ross] put the right players on the field, gave them enormous leeway, begged them for copy—and when the time came they produced coverage of the war that was unmatched."

In the 1940 article "Paris Postscript," author A.J. Liebling detailed the fall of France through news broadcasts that predicted the success of French resistance against German invaders one day and reported the failures of the defending forces the next. Through it all Liebling kept tabs on a couple whose son was at the front and their daily struggle to temper worry with pride. Liebling wrote, "He brooded, she scolded, he drank a little, they quarreled incessantly, and they loved each other more than two people I have ever known."

If you ever wondered what happened to John F. Kennedy on that PT boat, John Hersey interviewed Kennedy and three of his shipmates for the 1944 article "Survival," and it is a page-turner. S.N. Behrman wrote of post-blitz London in the 1945 article "The Suspended Drawing Room." It seems a poll revealed that Lon doners considered blackouts the greatest hardship they had suffered during the war, hands down. Behrman discovered that he agreed as he returned to his room one dark night. He wrote that the walk concluded safely at the hotel, "but I had aged."

In "Hiroshima," an article that filled the August 31, 1946, issue, John Hersey tells the story of the wrenching power of the nuclear age by tracing the fate of six survivors of the bomb blast, from the hours before Little Boy exploded above the city on August 6, 1945, through the weeks that followed. Writing about a Miss Sasaki, who would be crippled for the remainder of her life because a compound break in her leg wasn't set, or about wounds on a Jesuit priest that wouldn't heal, was risky journalism that "portrayed civilians in America's hated enemy, Japan, for the first time as human beings," says Remnick.

Embedded journalist Liebling crossed the English Channel with American troops for the June 6, 1944, landings in Normandy for an article on D Day, while John Lardner went ashore with marines at Iwo Jima for his 1945 article on the invasion of that island. Philip Hamburger covered V-E Day in Italy in the 1945 article "Letter from Rome."

As Remnick writes, "It is hard to overemphasize how fresh *The New Yorker*'s voices in the forties were compared with what was in most other magazines and daily newspapers." It paid off. From 1941 to 1945 circulation grew from 172,000 to 227, 000. "The war made *The New Yorker*."

But success came with a price. While the magazine flourished, Ross suffered from ulcers and exhaustion. In a letter to a friend in 1951, he wrote, "I started to get out a light magazine that wouldn't concern itself with the weighty problems of the universe, and now look at me." He died from complications of cancer on December 6, 1951.

The 40s: The Story of a Decade shows off the written word at its best, and it proves they just don't write like that anymore.

ALLYSON PATTON
book and media reviews editor

The Arsenal of Democracy: FDR, Detroit, and an Epic Quest to Arm an America at War
by A.J. Baime, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 384 pages, $27

WITH HINDSIGHT, it seems inevitable that America should have manufactured more products

than its enemies or its allies during World War II. However, as author A.J. Baime explains in his book *The Arsenal of Democracy*, the task looked impossible when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, during a radio address on December 29, 1940, called on the nation's industrialists to make the United States into "the great arsenal of democracy."

At that time the United States was still suffering the effects of the Great Depression, with nearly 17 percent of the nation's workers unemployed and only 48,000 taxpayers of 132 million earning more than $2,500 a year (roughly equivalent to $40,000 today). Against this backdrop, Baime focuses on the most impressive manufacturing success story from that era: Ford Motor Company's attempt to build one B-24 Liberator bomber per hour. Along the way he intertwines the stories of the Ford family, company executives, other Detroit automakers, and the citizens of Detroit to convey the technical and social challenges facing the company's efforts to meet Roosevelt's production goals.

It was fitting that the Ford Motor Company tackle the problem of producing four-engine bombers. More than two decades before the war, industrialist Henry Ford had perfected the assembly line at his Highland Park factory, thereby reducing the time needed to produce a Model T automobile from 728 minutes to 93. His key innovation was moving the parts to the workers on a series of conveyer belts—the assembly line. Added to that, Ford had increased his workers' wages to a minimum of $5 a day in 1914. The raise doubled the income of most of his workers and was much higher than wages in other industries (a common daily wage for steel workers was $1.75). "Fordism," the one-two punch of modern manufacturing techniques and high wages, quickly revolutionized not just the auto industry, but American society, and made the USA a worldwide industrial power.

Notwithstanding Ford's impressive manufacturing record, however, the heart of Baime's story is the conflict between Henry Ford and his son, Edsel. Henry Ford was a complicated and, in many ways, perverse man. He was remarkably progressive and hired African Americans, women, and

Some men love war
the way others love women.
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JOHN HERSEY'S
MAJOR NOVEL OF WORLD WAR II
THE WAR LOVER
STEVE McQUEEN ROBERT WAGNER SHIRLEY ANNE FIELD

★ THEATER OF WAR

The War Lover

Directed by Philip Leacock, written by Howard Koch from the book by John Hersey, starring Steve McQueen, Robert Wagner, Shirley Ann Field, Gary Cockrell, Michael Crawford, 1962, 105 minutes, black and white, not rated.

B-17 AFICIONADOS will find a lot to love in *The War Lover*, an adaptation of John Hersey's novel about the pilot and co-pilot of a B-17 Flying Fortress and the woman one of them loves. The pilot is Buzz Rickson (Steve McQueen), a man with "his heart set on blowing up the continent." The co-pilot is Bo Bolland (Robert Wagner), and Daphne (Shirley Ann Field) is the English rose for whom Bo falls at a dance.

Buzz reveals his character in the movie's first mission. Clouds obscure the target and the flight leader orders an abort. Buzz refuses. He takes his wing below the clouds and bombs at low altitude, his face betraying an orgasmic sense of release when his explosives detonate. On another occasion the bombers drop propaganda leaflets, and he is so enraged by the non-lethal cargo that he buzzes the airfield to show his contempt. (It's a great sequence for anyone who likes to watch B-17s.) In the air, Buzz is confident and capable, and his men trust him to bring them back alive. On the ground he is broken and dangerous. As the squadron's doctor tells an increasingly worried Bo, "There's a fine line between the hero and the psychopath."

When navigator Lynch (Gary Cockrell) dares to stand up to him, Buzz files a report claiming Lynch is about to crack. Bo's protest over the false allegation gets Lynch transferred to another plane, rather than grounded, but he is killed on his next mission. Once Buzz senses that Bo is challenging his authority, he attempts to have his way with Daphne. Back in the barracks, Buzz hints to Bo that Daphne succumbed to his charms. Then the two men leave on their most dangerous mission yet, a 1,000-bomber raid on Leipzig, hundreds of miles inside Germany.

Other than the B-17s, McQueen provides the best reason to watch the film. He brings a sense of damaged menace to the role of Buzz. Maybe that's because it cut close to home. "Steve was such a complicated man: always looking for conflict and never really at peace," recalled Wagner. The same is true of the character he plays.

The movie's weakest link is the romance. Field is easy on the eyes, but she serves mainly to underscore the movie's themes. "You are on the side of life," she tells Bo. She tells Buzz, "You can't make love. You can only make hate." By resisting Buzz's advances and making him look at his own twisted soul, she cracks his hard exterior—and the

people with disabilities. It also seems that he did not discriminate against Jews, even though he was a virulent anti Semite and published anti-Semitic missives in the independent weekly newspaper the *Dearborn Independent* from 1920 to 1927—for which he earned the very public admiration of Adolf Hitler.

In contrast, Edsel was kinder and more urbane than his father and far more willing to change the company to meet new challenges. Despite appointing Edsel to be company president in 1919, Henry continued as the *de facto* head of the company and frequently vetoed or reversed Edsel's decisions. As a result, father and son often clashed privately. The rivalry came to a head in 1940 as war loomed on the horizon. Henry Ford was a pacifist and adamant opponent of Roosevelt, while Edsel was a friend of Roosevelt's and was eager to help with the war effort.

Above all else, Roosevelt wanted four-engine heavy bombers. Edsel worked hard to overcome his father's objections and sign a contract to build B-24 Liberators. The B-24 was a newer design with slightly better performance than the B-17 Flying Fortress. Edsel agreed to build a new factory at Ford's own expense ($47 million in 1941) to fulfill the initial $480 million contract for 2,000 B-24s. There was no guarantee that Ford could produce the planes, and even if it did, there was every chance the bombers would not be made well. After all, a car company had never before built a huge bomber like the B-24. *The Arsenal of Democracy* tells the dramatic story of Edsel Ford's effort to fulfill his promise to build one bomber an hour.

Throughout the book, Baime skillfully cuts away from the bomber production story to provide wider context. He covers the August 1, 1943, Ploesti raid on Nazi controlled oil refineries in Romania—a raid that resulted in the loss of more than 20 B-24s and their crews. He also describes the racial tensions in Detroit that on June 20, 1943, led to one of the nation's bloodiest riots.

It would ruin the drama for those not familiar with B-24 history to reveal whether or not Edsel was able to actually achieve his goal of a bomber an hour. But the B-24 was the most produced warplane in history, and of the 18,482 B-24s produced, Ford built 8,685. *The Arsenal of Democracy* presents the full story of one aircraft project and demonstrates that there was nothing inevitable about America's wartime manufacturing miracle.

DREW AMES
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

cracks deepen during the Leipzig mission, threatening a full blown breakdown.

Filmed in black and white so the production could use B-17 footage from *Twelve O'Clock High* (including a spectacular belly landing by legendary stunt pilot Paul Mantz), *The War Lover* had only three B-17s for the shoot. The planes, all B-17Gs, were refurbished in the United States and flown to the shoot location in England. "It was a flight replete with minor but maddening mechanical failures," wrote Martin Caiden, one of the pilots. "We arrived finally in England despite the dire forebodings of our fellows in the aviation community—predictions abetted by several engine fires that at times threatened to disturb our peace of mind. The weather was consistently opposite to the forecasts; instead of predicted clear skies, we encountered howling storms in which the strength of the B-17 was tested severely." Unlike the missions portrayed in *The War Lover*, though, all of Caiden's bombers made it through.

—TOM HUNTINGTON
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Hoover's Secret War against Axis Spies: FBI Counterespionage during World War II

by Raymond J. Batvinis, University Press of Kansas, 312 pages, $34.95

ALL THE COMBATANTS in World War II feared there were foreign agents within their ranks, so they sponsored and supported special intelligence organizations that rooted out enemy saboteurs, provocateurs, and intelligence gatherers. The Germans and Japanese believed they were better at this activity than they actually were. Others, such as the British, were skilled at rooting out Axis agents, but smart enough to pretend they weren't. Unfortunately for the United States, its government and operatives couldn't compete with Old World intelligence organizations. Americans were very slow to pick up the required skills. The reasons for this were not many, but they proved critical.

Prior to the rise of the Axis Powers, the US military and diplomatic services had no provisions for coordinated intelligence units. Throughout the early 20th century, every presidential administration counted on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to keep foreign troublemakers at arm's length. Until the late 1930s, Americans expected law enforcement outfits to handle hostile aliens. Even as Fascist and Nazi support organizations openly recruited members and held rallies around the country, citizens looked to the nation's top cop, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, to handle any bad actors. These were naive miscalculations.

Hoover, the first and longest-serving director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, enjoyed public prestige following his Depression-era campaign against interstate crime superstars such as John Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson, and Machine Gun Kelly. A Washington, DC, native and a Georgetown University graduate, he was a complete creation of the capital city and its government culture and spent his career gathering power. He joined the Justice Department as a young man and was a veteran of the Red Scare and the department's Palmer Raids, which gathered up political dissidents and suspicious immigrants during the immediate post-WWI period. He had a knack for harassing political radicals and nonconformists, harbored a strong xenophobic streak, and disdained advice.

Nevertheless, in the late 30s, with no other obvious candidate, the Roosevelt administration requested Hoover's services for shadowing Nazi and Fascist activists in the United States. Hoover ran with it. He established specialized departments within his bureau to assess foreign threats on American soil and positioned himself as the nation's official spy-catcher.

In the decades since his 1972 death, historians and authors have established that his ego was immense and his hunger for control insatiable. As a consequence, they say, he

slandered scores of people and damaged countless reputations. But were his personality defects so large that they hindered the American war effort in the 1940s?

Until recently, Hoover's role in World War II hadn't undergone extensive public scrutiny, and the negative side of his performance had not been completely substantiated. But Raymond Batvinis's book *Hoover's Secret War against Axis Spies* takes steps in that direction. It exposes Hoover's counterintelligence missteps and his repeated refusals to cooperate with and learn from experienced Allied espionage experts. It also provides a long list of unsung FBI heroes who fought the Axis threat from Canada to the tip of Argentina.

Agent Garbo, by Stephan Tally, and *Double Cross*, by Ben Macintyre, two books from 2012 reviewed in this magazine, laid out clearly the role of MI5 (Britain's counterespionage agency) in upending the Nazis' *Abwehr* spy network, breaking the German military's infamous Enigma code, and concealing the landing targets of the 1944 D-Day invasion of France. These books, along with information published during the last 15 years, also point out problems Allied intelligence agencies had in getting the full cooperation of the FBI and Hoover.

Batvinis elaborates on these problems in the first several chapters, then goes on to tell the stories of his agents' labors—stories that were suppressed for decades because of security concerns and, perhaps, the demands of Hoover's ego. At the conclusion, it's clear Hoover believed that *his* best interests were *America's* best interests, that *his* successes were *America's* successes. Any failures or embarrassments were someone else's.

For seasoned fans of espionage tales, there may not be many new great reveals in *Hoover's Secret War*, but there are a few. How British agents raided, read, and resealed shiploads of foreign mail passing through Bermuda, Jamaica, and Trinidad, sometimes in mere hours, is astounding. The Nazi spy nests scattered all over Mexico and their radio networks across North America now appear larger and more sophisticated than many readers may have believed. The fact that Hoover knew that the Soviet intelligence network in the United States was already well established long before the end of World War II, and that it was not thoroughly infiltrated by the FBI, is illuminating

JOHN STANCHAK
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

★ 78 RPM

The Sinatra Survivor

LOSING A TALENT LIKE Frank Sinatra might have toppled a lesser band leader, but Tommy Dorsey stayed on his feet through just about anything. He had what it took to succeed as a music boss: unmatched ability on his instrument (the trombone), natural ease as a musical director, and a knack for business. When Sinatra left Dorsey's big band to go solo in 1942, Dorsey didn't miss a beat. He even made a deal to own half of Sinatra's action

The Tommy Dorsey band worked because whatever Tommy Dorsey did seemed to work. He made sure of it. He was abrasive and outspoken, but those traits were intertwined with the competitiveness and perfectionism that drove his success. A habit of cherry picking the best talent from competitors' groups didn't hurt, either. Joe Marsala, a band leader and clarinetist, once sent Dorsey a wire saying, "Dear Tommy, how about giving me a job in your band so I can play with mine."

It was in 1940 that Dorsey hired a young and promising Sinatra, plucking him from the Harry James band. Sinatra became great with Dorsey's help. As Dorsey arranger Dick Jones put it, "Frank's musical taste was developed at Dorsey's elbow."

Dorsey pushed Sinatra the way he pushed all his performers and molded a big band that many considered the all around best. It swung harder than most and the soloists were hotter. Its ballads were especially loved, earning the prickly leader the nickname Sentimental Gentleman of Swing.

The next couple of years were Dorsey's best. His first wartime hit came in mid 1942 with "Just as though You Were Here," with singing supplied by the vocal group the Pied Pipers rather than Sinatra. A few months later, as Sinatra started to draw more attention, he led Dorsey onto the charts with "Take Me." The pairing's first number one hit of the war came late that year with "There Are Such Things." A couple of other hits followed after Sinatra's departure in 1942. In April 1944 the Dorsey band took the stage at Carnegie Hall to record a V Disc, a special record for distribution only within the military. The band's final wartime hit was "Opus One," two months before the German surrender.

The big band era was fading, and by 1946 it was gone. But Dorsey remained near the top of the heap. He had spent the war years recording, touring the country to do live shows, playing on the radio, and appearing in movies. Without fail, whenever the band played its theme song, "I'm Getting Sentimental over You," the crowd revved up. About the only thing that had gone wrong for Dorsey in the music business was his piece of the Sinatra solo act. With the help of some influential friends, Sinatra had made that disappear.

—CARL ZEBROWSKI
editor of *America in WWII*

WWII EVENTS

ALABAMA • **Oct. 2–4, Samson:** Lamar and Jewell Rowland's Just-a-Loafin' Rally. Historic military vehicles, trail rides, convoy, campfire discussion, and more. Dixie Division Military Vehicles Club event. Just-a-Loafin' RV Park, 7557 Alabama 153. Lamar Rowland, 334-313-6040. www.ddmvpa.org

BELGIUM • **Sept. 5–7, Mons:** Tanks in Town 2014. Living museum of WWII armored vehicles, including the 2nd Armored Tour in Europe 2014. 15 Euro per person. www.tanksintown.be

CALIFORNIA • **Sept. 6, Chino:** Fork-Tailed Devil. Lockheed P-38 Lightning flight demonstration, guest panel discussion, raffle for a flight. 10 A.M.–noon. Planes of Fame Air Museum, 7000 Merrill Avenue No. 17. 909-597-3722. www.planesoffame.org

Oct. 4, Chino: Carrier Air War in the Pacific. Flight demonstration by a Grumman TBM Avenger, speaker panel, raffle for a flight in the Avenger for members. 10 A.M.–noon. Planes of Fame Air Museum, 7000 Merrill Avenue No. 17. 909-597-3722. www.planesoffame.org

IDAHO • **Sept. 28, Nampa:** Gold Star Mothers Day. Free admission to the museum for all Blue Star and Gold Star mothers. 11 A.M.–4 P.M. Warhawk Air Museum, 201 Municipal Drive. 208-465-6232. www.warhawkairmuseum.org

MARYLAND • **Oct. 10–12, Williamsport:** 7th Annual WWII Weekend. Screening of Alfred Hitchcock's 1944 film *Lifeboat*, parade, 1940s fashion show, battle reenactment, USO dance, and more. 2 North Conococheague Street. 301-223-7711. www.williamsportmd.gov/wwii_weekend

MASSACHUSETTS • **Oct. 12, Fall River:** Third Annual Battleship Brewfest. Beer sampling, food, and live music on a WWII battleship. $35 in advance, $40 at the door. Museum admission included. Battleship Cove, 5 Water Street. 508-678-1100, ext. 101 or 102. www.battleshipcove.org

MISSOURI • **Oct. 11–17, Arcadia:** 5th Annual "Show Me" Missouri Convoy. WWII-era vehicles with uniformed drivers and passengers traveling 547 miles through the St. Francois Mountains, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, and Mark Twain National Forest. Departs from 211 College Street. $50 per car. Terry Johns, halftrackjohns@att.net. www.6thcorpslhg.com

NEW HAMPSHIRE • **Sept. 2, Wolfeboro:** Screening of *The Rape of Europa*. This 2006 documentary explores efforts of historians to return or restore works of art stolen or damaged by the Third Reich. Doors open at 5:30 P.M. for 6:00 screening. $7 per person. Wright Museum of WWII History, 77 Center Street. 603-569-1212. www.wrightmuseum.org

NORTH CAROLINA • **Oct. 4, Siler City:** Third Annual Military and Civvy Jeep Swap Meet. East Coast Willys Restoration Shop. 8 A.M.–4 P.M. 1346 East 11th Street. 919-428-0951. paul@eastcoastwillys.org

TEXAS • **Sept. 20, Fredericksburg:** 2014 Annual Symposium: In Stealth We Trust. Discussion of WWII foundation of US Special Operations Forces. 8 A.M.–5 P.M. $30 active duty, $60 non-members. National Museum of the Pacific War. Fredericksburg Theater Company, 1668 Highway 87 South. www.pacificwarmuseum.org

Oct. 18, Hearne: Rise Above. Living history event. Flight by Commemorative Air Force's Red Tail Squadron, rides, tours, and multimedia exhibit. 10 A.M.–4 P.M. FM 485 and Airport Road. 979-314-7012. www.camphearne.com

Please call the numbers provided or visit websites to check on dates, times, locations, and other information before planning trips.

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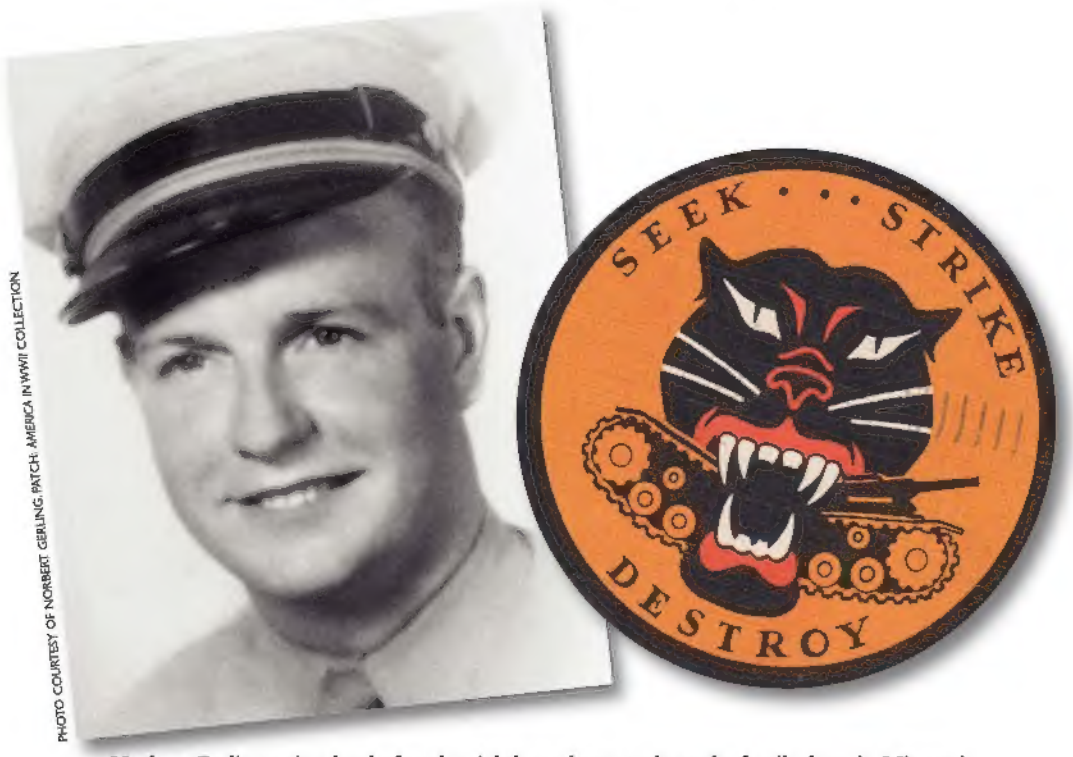

PHOTO COURTESY OF NORBERT GERLING; PATCH: AMERICA IN WWII COLLECTION

Norbert Gerling quit school after the eighth grade to work on the family farm in Missouri. Then the army came calling and he found himself in the tank destroyer forces (whose insignia appears here).

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE WAS IN FULL FURY, and the 609th Tank Battalion needed to replace two gunners lost in combat in Bastogne, Belgium. Norbert Gerling was one of four gunners in a 609th detachment that had been left behind for repairs. The men drew straws, and Gerling got a short one. "I entered the city on Christmas Eve," he recalls.

Bastogne was just one stop on what Gerling estimates was a 1,200-mile trek across Europe in an M18 Hellcat tank destroyer, a fast armored vehicle whose 76mm cannon smashed tanks. He made his journey with the 609th in Lieutenant General George Patton's Third Army, landing on Normandy's Utah Beach in August 1944.

The dangerous drive across Europe wasn't Gerling's idea. He had quit school after eighth grade to help his father work the family farm in Missouri's Cole County. But in 1941 he was drafted. "We were actually drafted for one year," he says. "But it ended up being a lot longer than that." Japan attacked Pearl Harbor while Gerling was in boot camp.

After training with Hellcats at Fort Hood, Texas, Gerling and the 609th joined maneuvers in Louisiana, then headed to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. In August 1944 the 609th got orders for Europe.

Gerling arrived on Utah Beach by way of Camp Shanks, New York, sailing to Liverpool, England, and then crossing the English Channel. Then the driving began. "We passed through France so fast that...we wound up in Metz and had to wait two to three weeks for our supplies to catch up to us."

After the Battle of the Bulge, the 609th entered Germany and crossed the Rhine River. "It was a battle here, a battle there—the same old thing," says Gerling. Along the way, he received the Bronze Star for helping men whose tank was disabled in combat.

Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945. That October, Gerling went home. He got married, raised a family, ran a farm—and eventually told his war story. ★

Submitted by JEREMY P. ÄMICK *of the veterans aid organization Silver Star Families of America.*

Send your GIs photo and story to editor@americainwwii.com or to: GIs, America in WWII, 4711 Queen Ave., Ste. 202, Harrisburg, PA 17109

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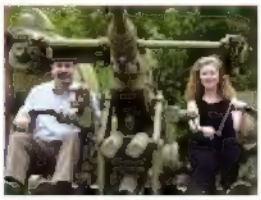

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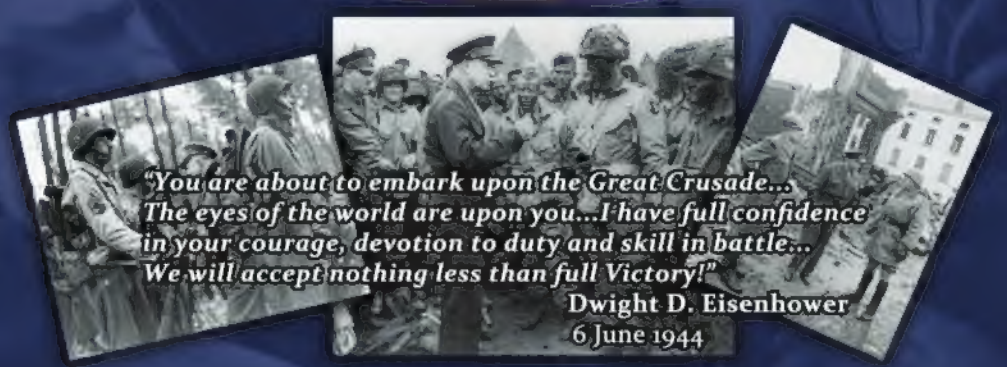
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